

A SENSE OF PLACE IN RURAL SETTLEMENT
A locally orientated study of the Huntingdonshire Ouse
Valley and the Eastern High Weald

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Abstract

This thesis is an examination of the contribution of studies in landscape history to the management of the historical environment and future development within rural settlements. It creates a series of narratives describing and explaining the pattern and form of rural settlement through two locally orientated studies. Finally it discusses how such narratives relate to the characterisation of rural settlement within the planning process.

Part 1 of the study explores how the growth of development pressures during the course of the twentieth century has led to the formulation of legislation to increasingly protect valued aspects of the historical environment. It scrutinises the nature of rural settlement and the impact of urbanisation upon it. It is argued that one result of these processes has been the re-discovery of a *sense of place* by local communities and others with an interest in rural settlement.

Part 2 critiques how the historical analysis of rural settlement might be approached to build a locally orientated methodology for settlement studies, and explains the methodology used in the case studies. In Parts 3 and 4, the origins and development of rural settlement in the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley and six parishes in the eastern High Weald are analysed. Settlement pattern and form in the study areas are identified, and how they have changed over time described. This analysis demonstrates that settlement patterns and form are complex and not easily captured through regional generalisations. It is further argued that the results of the historical study of settlement impact on perceptions of contemporary settlement. The possible influences of such perceptions on future development are explored.

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PREFACE

*“Put
Your hand on stone. Listen
To the past’s long pulse.”¹*

¹ From ‘Stanton Drew’, *Collected Poems 1978-2003*, by U A Fanthorpe (1929-2009).

SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

Rural Settlement

We live in a long-settled country, and our settlements reflect this through the complexity and diversity of their structure and form. This richness, which is the result of changes that have come about over many ages, is a defining feature of the places where we live and work. Our settled landscape is, in fact, the result of constant change brought about by the development of the social, economic, and cultural environment in which each generation participates.

The focus of this investigation is rural settlement, which is an inclusive term that encompasses the many elements of human habitation in its landscape setting. Settlement can best be understood from a local analysis – the perspective from where it has actually grown and developed. Identifying each settlement from ground level, so to speak, empowers us to recognise its unique character, giving us valuable insights into its origins and form. Local orientated study of place is the key element in the hypothesis of this thesis. It constantly reminds us that places are individual, that it is their differences from other places that help to define them (not just their similarities), and that they are products not only of their landscape or townscape, but also the culture of the people who inhabit them.

The upward trend in the population of England and increased urbanisation have affected the character of many rural settlements. The nature and amount of this transformation has been dramatic: whilst rural settlement has always been subject to fluctuation and progressive change, this has accelerated exponentially since the nineteenth century and especially so since the 1940s. The response to these pressures has been both

the growth of planning legislation and government regulation to control developments in historically sensitive areas, and increased public concern over the character of their local environment. There is now, as never before, a need to record individual settlement morphology, and understanding the origins of such rural settlements has become a matter of practical concern as well as academic interest.

Approaches to Studying Rural Settlement

This thesis explores contemporary approaches to understanding the historical environment in rural areas. It relies principally on the methodologies developed by landscape historians for the analysis of settlement. However, the thesis also highlights the propensity of much recent scholarship to prioritise regional analysis and typological characterisation of rural settlement. Whilst such systems have many benefits, particularly a strategic view that explains the wider context, they also have their limitations. In particular, regional approaches are poor at articulating local differences at the level of individual settlements, because these studies are dependent on a broad scale of analysis that masks local variations. It is argued here that there is a need to rebalance away from too much emphasis on regional perspectives by putting more emphasis on locally orientated studies.

The expansion of rural settlement in most areas in response to demographic changes and development pressures over the last half century has emphasised the importance of *place* to local communities. Appreciating the origins of rural settlements to inform community and planning expectations is cause to revisit locally orientated studies. A place becomes what it is through a complex historical process, which can be understood through an appreciation of episodes of continuity and change.

The historical geographer M R G Conzen (1907-2000) suggested this process of continuity and change can be put on a more systematic footing through the recognition of morphogenic periods: that is, the identification of times of new growth in a specific settlement and the relationship, over time, between those events. This thesis seeks to explore a methodological approach to locally orientated research incorporating an appreciation of the Conzenian method, which forms a fundamental element in the historical analysis used in this study. The results of this analysis are expressed as an interpretative narrative – an illustrated ‘story’ of the settlement. With this approach it is hoped to contribute insights into the origins and nature of rural settlement in two local area studies.

THE LOCAL AREA STUDIES

The original motivation for this thesis grew out of the experience of working with a number of local planning authorities: the original issue was how to implement the approach to the management of the historical environment being advocated by English Heritage. This experience strongly indicated the benefits of local settlement studies and the appropriateness of the case study approach. From this developed the methodology for the case studies explored in this thesis – basically, a method grounded in its fitness for purpose.

The choice of study areas was influenced by the intimate knowledge of both areas developed through earlier research. However, it was their particular settlement attributes that decided this choice. The two areas selected for the case studies – the Huntingdonshire Great Ouse Valley and the eastern High Weald of Kent and East Sussex have very different historical morphologies and they also differ in terms of the development pressures that currently apply to them. The location of Huntingdonshire

Great Ouse Valley at the juncture of the A1/A14 corridors has subjected it to considerable development pressures, which have often threatened the integrity of its historical environment. Conversely, the High Weald, because of its designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), has been protected from many of the development pressures experienced in Huntingdonshire – but development is still an issue.

In terms of their settlement pattern both study areas are also distinguished from each other. The Ouse Valley might be considered firmly within the area of champion countryside, with much nucleated settlement and post-Parliamentary inclosure farmlands, but (as this study reveals) it has in reality a more involved and dispersed morphology. The High Weald on the borders of Kent and East Sussex is an area of ancient enclosure and wood pasture, with a highly dispersed settlement pattern, which is arguably changing to one with a higher degree of nucleation.

This thesis explores the early settlement histories of both areas and how they have developed over time up to the transformations caused by urbanisation and demographic pressures. It also examines them in relationship to their morphogenic periods, which might be expected to reflect the observable differences in their settlement patterns and landscape. However, this whole analysis shows that the difference in the overall pattern of morphogenic periods for each area is less apparent than might have been anticipated. Finally, it summarises the findings of the research in the study areas and evaluates the methodology applied to them.

KEY RESEARCH QUESTION, AIMS, AND OBJECTIVES

The key research question that the thesis strives to address is how to manage future development in rural areas in the light of identified changes to, and pressures upon, their historical morphology.

The aim of the thesis is to demonstrate, through an empirical study of historical settlement in two contrasting rural areas, how locally orientated research into rural settlement can support the management of future development that is central to the key research question. A secondary aim is to relate the local level of analysis to broader regional approaches whilst exploring the benefits of both.

The aims of the research will be pursued through a number of objectives. Specifically, these objectives are: (a) to design a methodology that employs a range of analytical approaches that can be applied in any locality, without the burden of constructing complex taxonomies; (b) to test the effectiveness of a methodology designed to produce locally orientated interpretative narratives; (c) to develop interpretative narrative as a basis for informing the management of historically sensitive environments and future development within them; and (d) to explore the importance of the enduring *sense of place* for understanding local communities and their settlements.

CONTENT OVERVIEW

Chapter 1: Offers an overview of recent challenges to rural settlement and some responses to these. It explores approaches to understanding the historical rural environment and introduces the idea of the *sense of place*.

Chapter 2: Discusses the role of change on settlement morphology and the key change agents that affect our historical rural settlements and

have influenced the pattern of development. For example, the post Second World War rebuilding programme, domestic structural changes (such as demographic shifts, social expectations) and the effects of urbanisation.

Chapter 3: Examines the history of conservation philosophy and practice as it relates to the built environment and the preservation of spatial elements within the countryside since the late eighteenth century. It also offers a critique of current practices in the management and development of the historical environment.

Chapter 4: Explores an holistic approach to the study of settlement morphology grounded in landscape history approaches and the work of settlement morphologists, especially M R G Conzen. It also sets out the methodology used in this study.

Chapters 5 – 12: These chapters contain the empirical studies of Ouse Valley and the High Weald settlements. The approach taken in each of these studies differs somewhat, one from the other, to allow for the different character of the areas and differences in the evidential record. The overall thrust of the studies, however, remains the same – an attempt to record the origins, nature and the major themes that have shaped the historical settlement morphology of these two distinct landscapes.

Chapter 13: This chapter summarises the main issues that have arisen from the research, evaluates the methodology, and assesses the value of locally orientated studies. It concludes with a discussion of future possibilities.

TERMINOLOGY, DEFINITIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

Generally speaking, specialist terminology used in this study is explained in the text when first used. Likewise, definitions and abbreviations are given at the point of first usage.

The general term ‘historical environment’ is used to describe the spatial relationship between elements of settlement morphology (for example, buildings) and associated landscape features in their context: where these features have grown up over a period of time beyond living memory. The use of the term ‘historic’ in the current literature is often used indiscriminately to mean *noted or celebrated in history*, as well as *relating to or concerned with history* (see definitions in *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary*). In this study the term ‘historic’ is reserved for formal designations (i.e. the National list of *historic* buildings) or where ‘noted or celebrated in history’ is intended (i.e. Bodiam has an *historic* castle). At all other times the generic *historical* is used.

The concept of ‘rural settlement’ is understood to include a wide range of settlement types, embracing market towns, villages, hamlets and individual farmsteads. There is no tight definition of the term ‘rural’ implied here – although the idea that the term implies a connection with countryside based socio-economic systems is favoured.

The following refer to key ideas and issues that have specific relevance to the field study:

Nucleated and Dispersed Settlement: The concept of ‘nucleated’ and ‘dispersed’ settlement is widely used in settlement studies and should not cause any confusion. However, although the idea conveyed by the terminology is easily understood, it is often the case that attempts at

defining what is nuclear or dispersed settlement at any one period or place can be frustrated. This is because there is the lack of a clear and unambiguous definition of each of these terms. It is not the intention of this study to attempt to solve this thorny issue, but the effects of this confusion are looked at when appropriate.

Enclosure: The study has adopted the convention of using the term ‘enclosure’ to denote the process of enclosure of all ages, except where specifically Parliamentary ‘enclosure’ is referred to when the variant ‘inclosure’ is used.

Land Measurement: Which system of land measurement is used is potentially an issue when dealing with historical material, because of the change from Imperial to metric measurement in this country in the late twentieth century. The convention adopted here is to use acres throughout, since this is how area is recorded in historical documents. However, when describing contemporary land use, hectares are also supplied in brackets afterwards. Fractions of acres, where calculations are required, are converted to decimals (this is largely because GIS programmes calculate in this way) – in practice, where there are a large number of items to be calculated (as in the tithe apportionments) this can lead to a slight discrepancy in totals: however, where these occur they are minor and make no difference to the results. Larger land areas are usually recorded in square kilometres, especially when applied to the contemporary landscape.

Communal farming, where the management of local agriculture was organised by, and on behalf of, the whole community. Under this system arable land was organized in open fields. Where individual farms were

managed as separate units, without reference to community control, this is referred to as *farming in severalty*.

‘Open’ and ‘Close’ Parishes: The degree to which a single landowner controlled all or a large part of a parish could be important in shaping its settlement morphology as well as its tenorial history. The term ‘open’ indicates where land is distributed among a large number of owners, and the term ‘close’ where land is owned by one or a very small number of owners – thus following what has now become conventional usage based on original work by B A Holderness (Holderness 1972).

Much of the mapping and associated analysis was performed using a Geographical Information System (GIS), the software package used here being ESRI ArcGIS 9.2, and its mapping conventions regarding scales etc. adopted. Ordnance Survey maps were supplied by EDINA, unless otherwise stated. Copies of other historic maps have been adjusted in Adobe Photoshop, where this has been necessary to make them legible. Maps and plans are positioned at the end of the sections of text to which they apply.

Finally, the data used in this study are valid up to May 2010 (the date of the General Election) - later information or publications cited have not necessarily been fully considered.

Part One:

PRELUDE

CHAPTER 1: SETTING THE SCENE: TOWARDS A “SENSE OF PLACE”

“Consult the genius of the place in all”

*(Alexander Pope, 1688-1744)*¹

¹ Epistles to Several Persons: Epistle IV, To Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington, line 57 advising him on the proper approach to designing estate landscapes.

THE CHALLENGE

In 1946, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Royal Air Force embarked on an extensive programme of aerial photography to produce a stunning representation of what the settlement pattern of the United Kingdom was like at what turned out to be a critical point in its domestic planning history. Whilst in the Nation's built-up areas and industrial centres the devastation of war was very evident, the rural landscape was less obviously affected by the war in terms of the destruction of its physical infrastructure. The picture was of a countryside (beyond the areas of pre-war suburbanisation) very largely unchanged from that presented by the Ordnance Survey's first large scale maps of the mid to late nineteenth century — and in areas of old enclosure, such as the High Weald, the similarities stretch much further back in time to the tithe surveys and estate maps of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Now, over sixty years on, an observer has often to look hard at the contemporary aerial photograph or map to make out the morphology of older settlement patterns easily discerned on the 1946 aerials.

This unprecedented rate of development has presented governments and citizens alike with immense challenges in many spheres, of which self and community identity is not the least critical (Eyles 1985, 2-6). The post-War planning confidence, under-pinned for many by the belief that the Nation's future happiness could be secured by the re-casting of our built environment into a brave new modernity — the Modernist movement — proved to be over optimistic. The Modernist agenda prevailed in the immediate aftermath of the War, despite opposition from such as John Betjeman (1906-1984) poet, writer and broadcaster, Bertram Clough Williams-Ellis (1883-1978) architect, and William George Hoskins (1908-

1992) economist and local historian [Matless 1998, 274]. It was sustained partly by the logic of the post-War planning regime and partly by the ideology of leading edge Modernist architects of the *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne* [CIAM] (Samuels 1990, 431). By the 1960s, however, a movement to conserve the built environment of the past led to the Civic Amenities Act in 1965, which signalled effectively the end of the Modernist experiment (Pickard 1996, 214/5).

Post-War changes occurred most rapidly and, initially, to the greatest extent in areas that had experienced the heaviest destruction. The historic core of cities like Exeter, Coventry and the City of London, which had suffered badly in the Blitz, were seen as prime candidates for the modernisers (Cullinworth and Nadin 1994, 8). Later, areas that had survived the bombing, but were considered sub-standard became targets for slum clearance and improvement. This was a move that affected the great urban centres like Birmingham and Manchester as well as smaller towns including many historic market and county towns (Freeman 1990, 258) (Plate 1.1). Faversham in Kent, for example, only narrowly escaped losing a fine street of timber-framed houses, largely through the efforts of a local councillor, who saw the beauty beyond the existing squalor² (Plate 1.2).

² Personal comment, John Bailey, SPAB Kent & Surrey Regional Group.

Plate 1.1 1960's Style Development, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire (after Freeman 1990, figure 12.5)



Market Street, Aylesbury 1963



Market Street, Aylesbury, 1964

Plate 1.2 Abbey Street, Faversham in Kent



What was perceived by many during this period as the wholesale destruction of substantial parts of the historical built environment of English towns and cities (and also within more rural areas if the destruction of country houses are included [Strong et al 1974]) led to informal alliances between a range of professional and community based groups. Such an alliance was the one between The Council of British Archaeology and the Civic Trust in the mid-1960s³. The harnessing of the planning system by the Civic Amenities Act for the protection of the specific historic areas, the impact of cognitive studies of the historical built environment (Larkham 1990), and popular interest in these issues, has influenced the way that development operates in practice (Short et al 1986).

Present and Future Development Pressures

Managing the historical environment in the context of present and future development is a complex task that is fraught with difficulties. Issues such as changing demographic trends and rising population, the demands of economic competitiveness and other socio-economic realities in an urbanised and global economy mean that decisions need to be taken for the common wellbeing that can deeply effect the historical environment in both urban and rural settings (Cooper 2004). The greatest development pressures might be conceived as being in the cities and larger towns, and the history and focus of much of the relevant planning law and regulation arguably reflects this. However, rural settlements (and in particular their market towns) are also under increasing pressure from new developments — especially from the demand for new homes. The previous Labour government's house building targets were one example of this (Dewar 2000,

³ The Civic Trust was founded by Duncan Sandys in 1957, an umbrella organisation for other local, community based civic amenity groups (www.civictrust.org.uk/about/history/outline-chronology-of-the-civic-trust/).

1). House-building pressures reflected in such targets (or whatever replaces them) will continue to have an impact on all settlements, particularly rural ones. For example, plot infilling or the building of peripheral housing developments not only increase the physical area and density of the built environment, but may also encourage other developments such as out of centre shopping facilities and industrial estates — all of which can radically change a settlement's morphology and the experience of living there.

Aspects of the Current Planning Regime

The current planning regime attempts to manage development pressures on the historical environment within the framework of existing planning law and regulation. As Whitehand has commented, 'planning practice at the landscape level in Great Britain consists overwhelmingly of development control' (Whitehand 1990, 370). The process is one where landowners and property developers initiate schemes that are scrutinised by elected members responsible for local planning. The process is mediated by planning professionals who offer advice and recommendations to planning committees based on their expert opinion drawn from a range of sources. In terms of the protection of the historical environment this advice will be linked closely to a legislative framework and related official guidance that is primarily about conservation (Pickard 1996). Conservation in the context of English planning usage is concerned with an approach that allows for change, particularly with change that enhances an area (Mynors 1984; 1997).

Planning law itself, however, is focused on a few particular aspects of the historical environment that are considered desirable to protect. Thus the conservation of historic buildings, conservation areas, ancient monuments, archaeological remains, and aspects of the 'natural' countryside that are

deemed especially valuable, are dealt with under specialist legislation — relying upon government regulation and advice to tie them together (Department of National Heritage 1990; 1994). The distinctions between these different elements have tended to influence the discussion and direction of study and debate, although English Heritage is now attempting to encourage the management of historical settlement in a more coherent and morphologically focused way (English Heritage 2006; 2008). Academics from a number of disciplines, with an interest in historical townscape morphology and their management have discussed these ideas widely for longer (Larkham 1990, 349 – 366).

An essential element in current law and regulation about good planning practices is the involvement of the public in planning decisions (Cullingworth and Nadin 1994, 65; Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2005, 6). The argument is that greater openness not only helps to protect an individual's property rights, but also adds greater authority to planning decisions when public debate and approval is demonstrable. Over the years this process has encouraged communities to form a view about the place in which they live, and individuals to develop a 'sense of place' (Short et al 1986, 227). However, this appreciation, understanding, and identity rely on the acquisition of knowledge by community groups grounded in historical research. The danger is that where such groups have not acquired this knowledge, and lack a basic understanding of what is required by the planning system, the result can be poorly presented argument and an undisciplined opposition to change, undermining their credibility (Porteous 1977, 366-7). In practice, of course, local communities currently struggle to make their voice heard in a system where they have no statutory power to directly affect planning decisions.

There are no shortcuts to the process of gaining better knowledge. For example, it was alluded to earlier that the comparison of aerial photographs of differing dates could be used as an indicator of change to the structure of settlements — as, indeed, may historical maps and plans. However, the plan view in general is not a substitute for the perspective gained of a place from ground level (Johnson 2007, 90). Unlike spatial relationships, the heights of built structures and natural features, perspective, views, and details such as building style and materials are poorly conceived from plans. Furthermore, the socio-economic associations that can also be part of local significance need the support of documentary evidence, whilst the presence of important historical features now partially or completely hidden below ground will require the elucidation of archaeological investigation (Larkham 1990, 353; English Heritage 1997, 5). Maps and plans, therefore, are insufficient on their own to convey the whole story or give us the level of understanding needed for soundly based decision-making.

To conclude: there is a complexity in the reality of historical landscapes, settlement patterns and morphology which needs to be recorded and eventually explained in a way that is accessible to non-experts in the field. Traditional landscape history analysis, together with insights from urban morphology can offer planners and developers a more dependable basis for decision-making. Better knowledge and understanding, based on a more thorough grasp of the significance of a settlement's history, would also help the community enhance their contribution and may also point more readily to possible improvements in the planning regime. Landscape history and urban morphology — themselves post-War phenomena — make an essential contribution to this process.

APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORICAL RURAL ENVIRONMENT

Landscape History

W G Hoskins published his book *The Making of the English Landscape* in 1955, at the height of the post-War house-building programme and in the same year as the introduction of the Green Belts. Hoskins' avowed intent was to make the historical evolution of the English landscape available to a wide audience for the first time (Hoskins 1971, 13-16), and the importance of this book in promoting landscape history is still recognised today. His approach was an empirical one, working through the process of change chronologically and drawing meaning from the study of actual occurrences in the landscape — seeing it as a document to be read. Other, often equally influential investigators have followed this path, for example C C Taylor (*Village & Farmstead*, 1983).

Ironically, it is for his rather notorious views on the twentieth century that Hoskins is often remembered. The opening words of his final chapter on *The Landscape Today* sums up what Matless has called 'the melancholy view of twentieth century landscape' (Matless, 1998):

The Industrial Revolution and the creation of parks around the country houses have taken us down to the later years of the nineteenth century. Since that time, and especially since the year 1914, every single change in the English landscape has either uglified it or destroyed its meaning, or both. Of all the changes in the last two generations, only the great reservoirs of water for the industrial cities of the North and Midlands have added anything to the scene that one can contemplate without pain. (Hoskins 1971, 298)

This polemic might not find favour with many landscape historians today; indeed other writers have taken a very much more positive and optimistic view of the changes to the English landscape in the twentieth

century, for example Nan Fairbrother's *New Lives, New Landscapes*. However, there are some significant issues raised by Hoskins' comments.

Today we are accustomed to a much more heterodox perspective on the visual impact of the twentieth century on rural settlement: the population has come to terms more readily with the effects of sixty years of post-War development, recognised as part of a legitimate process of historical change in the landscape. The prevailing view rests, to a large degree, on arguments about historical legitimacy: what is modern today will be historical tomorrow. Therefore the historical environment is merely what is left of a succession of 'modern' developments about which we are not necessarily qualified to make value judgements just yet (Conzen 1960, 6). There is truth in this, but Hoskins also offers some important insights into many contemporary changes despite his general (and perhaps not justified) pessimism about modern developments. Arguably, Hoskins has presented us with two most cogent truths. The first truth is that mechanised development technologies (such as mass earth moving machinery) have enabled large-scale redevelopment projects to sweep away all vestiges of past human activity and in the process divorce new developments from older morphologies (Hoskins 1971, 299). Often it has also produced poor or incongruous design (Wild 2004, 167). The second truth reminded us of the danger of untrammelled development in the pursuit of socio-economic goals within the historical environment. The example put forward by Hoskins was the fate of country houses, which in the building frenzy of the 1950's were being destroyed at a ferocious rate (Daily Telegraph, 14th June 2002)⁴. Hoskins' fears were verified twenty years later when the Victoria and Albert

⁴ In this article it was estimated that more than 1,000 country houses (about one in six) were destroyed in the twentieth century. The majority post the Second World War and in 1955, the year in which *The Making of the English Landscape* was published, it is estimated that one country house was being demolished every five days!

Museum mounted an exhibition in 1974, *The Destruction of the Country House* (www.vam.ac.uk/images/image/26533-popup.html). The issue is the extent to which those with responsibility for development within the historical environment have a duty to ensure that what takes place within rural settlements and their landscapes is done in a sustainable way, one that does not cause permanent damage to the living space of future generations (English Heritage 2008, 20).

However, other researchers were exploring a different approach to that followed by Hoskins and Taylor, one that relied on morphological taxonomies and system theory (Austin 2007, 92). These techniques were based on the notion that broad theories about settlement and the processes that formed them could be extrapolated from local detail to form a number of general hypotheses applicable to a wide range of settlement types. An influential example is Brian Roberts' and Robin Glasscock's *Villages, Farms and Frontiers* (1983), published in the same year as Taylor's *Village and Farmstead*, which typified the differences in approach (Austin 1985).

Since Hoskins' work there have been other contributions to understanding the landscape (some of the more recent examples include Muir 1999; and Johnson 2007). Rippon has encapsulated many of these in a recent publication for the Council of British Archaeology (Rippon 2004), where he provides a useful comparison between what he calls past and future orientated approaches — the latter supposedly especially created to assist in the management and planning of future development (Rippon 2004, 3), a theme that will be returned to later.

Excellent studies have been produced for individual parishes (for example, Muir 2001), on medieval settlement and landscapes in particular (for example, Lewis et al 1997; Williamson 2003; Jones & Page 2006), as well

as regional landscape studies such as the eight regional volumes published recently by English Heritage (Cossons ed. 2006). Mention should also be made of Roberts & Wrathmell's work (supported by English Heritage) to characterise English settlement according to its degree of dispersal (Roberts & Wrathmell 2000; 2002). All of these, and numerous others that have emerged over many years have greatly increased our understanding of these matters and it might be questioned whether more is needed. However, as argued above, there is a case for discussing a locally orientated approach to settlement and landscape studies purposely focused on the needs of planners, developers and others with the responsibility for managing the historical environment.

Morphology Studies

It has principally been in other disciplines that thought has been given to the analysis and management of historic settlement morphology and its relationship to the planning system. In the past this has fallen mainly to historical geographers, with more recently urban designers (and even the occasional architect) expressing interest (Slater 1990; McGlynn & Samuels 2000).

In England it is the geographer M R G Conzen⁵ who is arguably the most influential figure — the Hoskins of urban morphological research (Whitehand 1981). His work on the morphology of the historical built environment was conducted, to a large degree, within English country towns and his theory of urban morphology remains relevant to the built

⁵ M R G Conzen (1907-2000) was born in Berlin where he studied geography, history, and philosophy. He came to Britain in 1933 as a refugee from Nazi Germany. Conzen finished his academic training in historical geography in this country, becoming Professor of Human Geography at Newcastle University in 1965. Conzen's approach to the study of historic town morphology was strongly influenced by the German Geographers O Schluter, J Fritz and W Geisler, who were writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (based on Jay Appleton's obituary for the Royal Geographical Society and Whitehead 2001, 103/4).

environment of rural settlements generally (Conzen 1968). In particular he is remembered for his work on plan form analysis, which has inspired much subsequent research. However, it is also with his ideas about morphogenic periods that this thesis hopes to demonstrate how Conzen's techniques can inform landscape studies of rural settlement.

Morphology of the Historical Built Environment: Three Principles

Conzen's approach to the study of the built form is now widely accepted by many urban morphologists. Moudon, for whom urban morphology is an emerging interdisciplinary field, has reminded us that Conzenian morphological analysis is based on three principles — 'form', 'resolution' and 'time' (Moudon 1997, 7). Form, at the most local level of analysis, is defined by three fundamental physical elements — buildings (their mass, style, construction and materials), the spaces around them, and the streets that link them together. Resolution identifies the scales of analysis — local urban form, the city, and the region. Time marks the recognition that form needs to be understood historically as it undergoes continuous transformation and replacement. Conzen termed this process 'morphogenesis'⁶. This perspective very much reflects the Conzenian tradition of historic town-plan analysis and the idea of related geographical regions (Whitehand 2001). Although urban morphologists have extrapolated their own analysis for a specifically urbanised context, it would work in other frames of reference with suitable modifications. Essentially, the geographical origins of Conzen's analysis — being "primarily about how things fit together on the ground" (Whitehand 2001, 108) — paves the way

⁶ The term *morphogenesis* is potentially misleading here when compared with its use by Austin who, in his article 'Doubts about Morphogenesis' (Austin 1985), used the term 'morphogenesis' pejoratively to describe a *retroactive* analysis of the morphology of recent settlement forms (see above). Conzen's own approach, however, was similar to Taylor's — the antithesis of Austin's criticism.

for this hierarchy of analysis to be applied in landscape history. As Williamson has pointed out, this also focuses “on physical structures and spatial relationships, past and present” (Williamson 2002, 21). The practical implications of this theme will be returned to in Chapter Four.

Morphology and Local Distinctiveness

A fundamental issue within the debate on differing approaches to understanding the historical environment is how the different scales of analysis relate to each other. The morphological model discussed above is grounded in a detailed study of the local, but embraces appropriate levels of analysis above it. Urban morphologists, in general, have worked with this approach for some time, recognising the importance of the wider context to studies of specific places (Bond 1990, 102). Kropf, for example, discussing character and identity suggests starting from the particular, but also advocates building a broader analysis within which to evaluate local distinctiveness, seeing both as part of the same locally orientated approach (Kropf 1996). These ideas reflect the view that people identify in particular ways with specific places and that locally orientated approaches are more understandable by local communities — tapping into a sense of place. There is already recognition that locally orientated studies benefit from knowing the wider context (Johnson, 2005), but more needs to be done to work out how these different scales of analysis might work together.

Regional or ‘Top-down’ Approaches to Understanding Historical Landscapes

The process of building up a picture of the historical landscape from a series of field observations and supporting documentary evidence is sometimes described as the ‘bottom-up’ approach. The process of constructing models and typologies from large data sets can be termed ‘top-

down' (Rippon 2004, 25-26). These are important distinctions because of the way that each of the approaches affects how landscape historians present their own material and the way that the proponents of each school of thought understand and critique their colleagues' work (Muir 1999, xiii-xiv).

The top-down or typological approach has favoured the development of regional perspectives in the analysis of the landscape. Regional schemes in landscape studies are of some antiquity: for example, the study of field systems (Gray 1915); farming districts (Thirsk 1987); settlement dispersal (Roberts & Wrathmell 2000), and landscape types (Rackham 1986). Everitt has taken regionalism further, attempting to co-relate geological regions with cultural ones — building on the French concept of *Pays* within an English regional perspective (Everitt 1977).

The contribution of regionalism in understanding significant elements of the historical environment is both enlightening and essential in giving the *bigger* picture (Williamson 2002, 11). On the other hand, a top-down approach like regionalism is not good for understanding *local* distinctiveness. This is because top-down approaches are by their nature reductionist: exceptions within the data that run counter to the typologies that support them are filtered out — allowing the patterns to emerge that are required for the broad, coherent perspective needed to make regionalism work.

Historical Landscape Characterisation (HLC)

English Heritage's HLC initiative is a top-down regional system based on English counties. It was designed to provide planners with a diagnostic tool (Clark et al 2004) to inform the planning process and the management of the historical environment (Fairclough et al 1999, 56). Until the genesis of

HLC it is probably true to say that there has been no sustained attempt by landscape historians or landscape archaeologists to engage with the planning and development process — outside the occasional giving of expert evidence to planning tribunals and routine involvement in the planning requirements for rescue archaeology.

However, HLC produces large, generalised data sets and has a great reliance on the validity of broad landscape types. This creates difficulties for the analysis of local historical environments when these generalised categories are used for informing planning decisions. This is because changes to the built form affect a very specific localised environment, well below the level of regional analysis. Therefore, HLC cannot be relied upon to provide a firm platform for complex planning decisions (Williamson 2007, 64-71; Austin 2007, 92-105). Such techniques on their own are insufficient and are not a substitute for complex, bottom-up studies.

Reconciling the Top-Down and Bottom-Up Approaches

The two approaches (top-down/bottom-up) can be seen as complementary, and recently there have been attempts to explain how this might be so. Rippon in *Historic Landscape Analysis* (2004) has described all the current approaches, with their strengths, weaknesses and usages. This encourages the idea of the compatibility of the various approaches, although Rippon does not attempt to reconcile them into any particular scheme. On the other hand Lake discusses how the “general” and the “particular” approaches (as he refers to them) may be seen as points on an analytical spectrum, which emphasises the need for a range of techniques at different scales (Lake 2007, 35-37). However, the issue is how to ensure that the generalist, top-down approaches actually engage conceptually as well as practically with local, particularist studies.

One of the difficulties is the fact that the different approaches use similar terms in slightly different ways: ‘local distinctiveness’, ‘place’, and even ‘characterisation’, are used to define the outputs of *both* the general (regional) and the particular (local study) scales of analysis (Lake 2007; Grenville and Fairclough 2004). It would be potentially less confusing if a differentiation were to be made between ‘regional’ and ‘local’ uses of the terms — for example, *regional* or *local* distinctiveness; reserving the use of *place* for the local; defining more precisely the meaning of the term *characterisation*.

PERCEPTIONS OF LANDSCAPE AND PLACE

The Contribution of Phenomenology

Phenomenological perspectives are well known to landscape historians, mainly through the work of post-processual archaeologists. Phenomenology in archaeology has been strongly influenced by Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* (first published in English 1962) and his work continues to be explored by cultural geographers and others (Wylie 2006, 519-535)⁷. Post-processual archaeologists were seeking to put humanity back into their discipline, in reaction to what they saw as an over reliance on positivism, empiricism and scientific method (for example, Bender 1998; Tilley 1994, 2004). However, a number of difficulties have arisen, one being whether the approach can successfully be applied to prehistoric communities where we have no way of actually capturing their understanding of the landscape. The other concerns the verification of potentially conflicting interpretations (Williamson 2008, 22-26). Barbara Bender has suggested that we need to go beyond the evidence when

⁷ Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) was strongly influenced by the phenomenological philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), as indeed was Schutz (1899-1959) [Wilson 2002].

interpreting ancient sites from the perspective of the people building and using them (Bender 1998). However, as Fleming has pointed out:

..having largely freed themselves from traditional concerns with verification, post-processualists had given themselves permission to say more or less whatever they liked. (Fleming 2006, 269).

The often rather blurred boundaries between disciplines involved in landscape studies ensure that this debate remains relevant for historians as well as archaeologists.

Social Science and the Meld of Phenomenology and Empiricism

Whilst the phenomenological approach has been a problem for archaeologists, it has been less so for social scientists dealing with contemporary, or at least well documented historical periods. This is because the phenomenological sociology worked out by its founder Albert Schutz contained “the postulate of adequacy” — a verification test (Schutz 1967). Schutz established an objective test for the subjective meaning of experience: that the constructs of social science are adequate if the subject of the scientific account finds it understandable in the terms of his/her own experience. In cultural geography, however, it is also recognised that a full explanation requires not only a phenomenological analysis of human experience, but also knowledge of mechanisms, forces and structures better understood through empiricist study. On this basis cultural geographers have been able to embed phenomenology into an empiricist approach to their work (Eyles 1985, 48-58). The idea that the explanation of a landscape cannot be gained solely through an empirical study, but also depends partly on understanding the experience of those people and their communities living within it, is an important one. It is reflected in Kropf’s previously expressed view that identity and character of place depend on local

distinctiveness, which could inform a bottom-up approach to both local and regional analysis.

Determining what the Historical Landscape is worth

The choices implicit in development control decisions exposes the problem of how to evaluate the worth of the existing morphology, as against planned changes. The difficulty arises in establishing an acceptable form of evaluation for the worth of existing heritage assets. Conservation *policy* is arguably value laden by the implied necessity that policy-makers have to publicly defend their actions within the cultural norms of the society to which it applies (Larkham 1990, 350). Certainly, criticism of public policy in the areas of heritage management and planning tend to be value laden, which Matless recognises when he suggests that “attempts to define a landscape necessitates judgements of cultural value, and throw up the issue of power, authority and pleasure” (Matless 1998, 13). In his book *Ideas of Landscape*, Johnson devotes a whole chapter to the politics of landscape, suggesting that alternative views of landscape exist based on gender, class, race and sexual orientation — reflecting, a complex value laden perspective (Johnson 2007, chapter 6).

On the other hand, it may reasonably be assumed that because academic research is based on observation, the recording of factual data and strives to be value free, that it should be the basis for evaluating worth⁸. This indeed seems to be the heart of much current planning advice, where ‘worth’ is expressed in terms of ‘value’ and ‘significance’ (DCLG 2010, PPS 5). Meanwhile, conservation practitioners face the practical necessity of deciding what to conserve on a daily basis, and the criteria for these

⁸ Although this assumption in the context of landscape studies has been challenged recently (Johnson 2007).

decisions (understandably) often struggle to find solutions. An example of how, when particular cultural perspectives take root, conservation issues can become value laden and politicised, is illustrated by the ‘gentrification’ debate.

The Gentrification Debate

The term ‘gentrification’ has become shorthand for a specific point of view relating to inner city redevelopment. It emerged when the appetite for wholesale inner city rebuilding waned in the late 1950s or early 1960s, when an alternative way was opened up to deal with what planners and developers saw as dilapidated and run-down urban areas. This involved the restoration of the existing housing stock, financed by sales to those willing to buy. Those able, and willing to purchase tended to be young ‘middleclass’ people and the sociologist Ruth Glass described this process as ‘gentrification’, because it invariably led to the substitution of previously ‘working class’ residents by ones from the ‘middleclass’ (Glass 1964). This debate continues to this day amongst sociologists and other academics interested in ‘class’ issues (Smith 1986; 1996).

Cultural and Symbolic Interpretations of Place

Even if most landscape historians would not wish to engage in the gentrification debate, the implications for perception of place by individuals and communities is still important. While many landscape historians can have a deep seated suspicion of what they see as a narrowly focused ‘local studies’ approach (Austin 2007, 92/3), it is worth remembering that for local communities it is more often than not these local differences that are valued in their perception of a sense of place — is often what they wish local planners and developers to respect (Kropf 1996, 248/9).

Landscape as Symbolic Meaning

The belief that a sense of place is also central to local planning and the effective management of the historical environment was given voice through English Heritage's recent report *Power of Place: The Future for the Historic Environment* (2000), which helped to bring back the focus of the management of historical environments to the *local*. Cultural geographers have looked at landscapes in this way for some time, studying the meanings that individuals and their communities place on cultural and symbolic interpretations of place (Cosgrove 1989). Human geographers such as Cosgrove and Daniels have for a long time promoted the view that it is the perception by local communities that invests landscape with meaning:

‘[we should apply] to the human landscape some of the interpretative skills we deploy in studying a novel, a poem, a film or a painting, of treating it as an intentional human expression composed of many layers of meaning....’
(Cosgrove and Daniels 1988)

This inspires a concept of cultural geography that treats geography as a humanity, not just a social science (Cosgrove 1989, 120). Landscape is invested with symbolic meaning and becomes a way of people seeing and understanding their position within the wider environment (Cosgrove 1989, 122-126). Interpreting the symbolism of cultural landscapes requires a wide range of evidence: this includes ‘material evidence in the field and cartographic, oral, archival and other documentary sources’ as well as ‘the evidence of cultural sources themselves — paintings, poems, novels, folk tales, music, film and song’ (Cosgrove 1989, 127). This sets the parameters within which the study of *place* occurs for the cultural geographer and taps into the phenomenological paradigm: how individuals and communities together *experience* the space in which they live, and how they understand this experience.

A Sense of Place

A *sense of place* brings an important perspective to how settlements are perceived and valued. The effect that this has on the management of the historical environment, and what is considered as acceptable development, is essential to this study. Sense of place as a concept within settlement and landscape studies has contemporary relevance to a number of disciplines. Mention has been made of cultural geographers like Cosgrove, or sociologists like Glass, but the idea of *place* being defined through human experience has been further refined by the human (or humanistic) geographer Yi-Fu Tuan. Tuan, whilst examining the relationships of space, place and time within the context of human experience, has transcended narrow cultural perspectives by exploring the impact of *universals* on how humans experience and understand place (Tuan 1977, 3-7).

All these approaches, however, assume (to a greater or lesser degree) that the idea of a sense of place is an authentic concept that genuinely distinguishes between places. Either a place is unique — there are no others quite like it — or the experience of it held by individuals and communities determines it to be so. In some respects, these notions parallel (but are not the same as) the literary theories that developed during the eighteenth century around the *genius loci*, as reflected (for example) in the works of Alexander Pope (1688-1744)⁹. In the eighteenth-century context, *genius* reflected both a topographic uniqueness (as in Pope) and an inspiration of the creative spirit beyond simple, natural ability (Young 1759). Whilst our contemporary deliberations on sense of place may not be well served by a return to a romanticised view of *genius*, the latter term does contain a quality that is not fully expressed by the term *sense*, which arguably fails to

⁹ Epistle IV to Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington, see footnote 1.

convey the same depth of meaning. However, an attempt to rekindle a little of the numinous beyond the prosaic in the sense of place may be found where urban designers, for example, attempt to balance the conservation of the historical built environment with phenomenological considerations (Salah Ouf 2001, 73-86).

Whilst for eighteenth-century theorists the *genius loci* was deeply rooted in the analysis of landscape — highly cultured landscapes such as landed estates — most of what is written concerning the sense of place is focused on the urban. However, the concept can be transferred successfully to rural settlement and its morphology. The approach taken in this study is to recognise the different structure of rural settlement to that of the urban, but to apply the principles of the later to the former where this is appropriate.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Whether phenomenology should have a central place in the study of landscape and place is debateable, but it is clear that some level of experiential understanding is important. At the very least this suggests that a satisfactory landscape history approach should be able to express itself *from ground level*. Maps, plans and aerial images are extremely valuable tools for helping to explain much about landscape and the settlement within it — and in truth landscape historians would be lost without these aids. However, in reality people experience these same settlements and landscapes almost always from ground level — whether from the valley floor or the hilltop — and any analysis needs to reflect this fact. In practice this translates into an analysis of the elements that lend character to how settlement morphology is perceived on the ground. Much of what Conzen wrote about street layout, plot size, building form and materials were

designed to capture these elements. This approach is now considered standard practice in an attempt to capture the sense of place.

Discovering the sense of place should be a collaborative effort. Landscape historians, archaeologists, and historical geographers with a particular interest in defining the historic environment need to develop techniques and approaches that can successfully communicate with each other and with other disciplines (Turner 2007, 41-43). Finding a common language might also be the first step to finding a common grammar with which to evaluate the historical environment -- one that has meaning to all likely interested parties. A planning/development friendly analysis must be capable of expressing both local differences as well as similarities and accommodate regional or sub-regional perspectives. There is a wide range of 'stakeholders' within the process of managing and developing rural settlement and landscape — each with an agenda, objectives and philosophies to be considered and reconciled. These stakeholders include central and local government, planners and urban designers, developers, conservationists, as well as members of the local community. Without this, progress may be both slow and uncertain, as conservationists, developers, planners and governmental agencies often use different ways of analysing the issues involved in the management of change: bridging this gap would surely be beneficial.

Greater public interest and involvement, in particular, has produced a thirst to rediscover local and cultural identity and value in the settlement morphology of the past. This has led many to seek ardently for the sense of place within their own community living space — and a desire for this to be protected by those responsible for the management of the environment in

collaboration with the people who live there¹⁰. How to do this is of pressing importance in a country where the rate of change is continuing to increase.

¹⁰ A theme reflected in English Heritage's publication *Power of Place: The future of the historic environment*, (2000), which graphically demonstrates how this approach has become part of the political landscape (see, also, Johnson 2007).

CHAPTER 2: THE NATURE OF CHANGE, REGULATION, AND THE URBANISATION OF RURAL SETTLEMENT

“To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often”

(John Henry Newman 1909, 43)

INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth-century theologian, John Henry Newman's observation, originally addressed to us as individuals, might also be applied to the communities within which we live, and more pertinently the settlements that house them. Change is a frequent occurrence in the history of settlement morphology and it is verifiable by the most casual observation. Within our rural settlements there are buildings from different ages, some parts of the built environment succeed others, or the land has been subject to a number of possible uses involving a greater or lesser degree of enclosure. However, behind the casual observation the exact nature of this change within the structural form of rural settlements is both complex and often difficult to describe with certainty.

CHANGE IN THE MORPHOLOGY OF SETTLEMENT

The nature of change in the morphology of settlement and the processes that bring it about have long been of interest to urban morphologists, many of whom have been strongly influenced by M R G Conzen, for whom this dynamic was axiomatic to his work (Whitehand 2003, 2). In the course of describing his method for the town-plan analysis of Alnwick, Conzen states that:

...a town, like any other object of geographical investigation, is subject to change. Towns have a life history. Their development, together with the cultural history of the region in which they lie, is written deeply into the outline and fabric of their built-up areas. When one period has achieved the manifestation of its own requirements in the urban pattern of land use, streets, plots and buildings, another supersedes it in turn, and the built-up area, in its functional organization as well as in its townscape, becomes the accumulated record of the town's development. (Conzen 1960, 6)

Conzen stresses the importance of historical continuity between morphological periods for understanding the processes of change within what he termed his morphogenetic approach (Conzen 1960, 119). The study of settlement morphology has been further strengthened within the last twenty years or so, by the cross-fertilisation of ideas between the British Conzenian-influenced schools of urban morphologists (mainly geographers) with those held by Italian morphologists (principally architects and city planners) [Moudon 1997, 4-5]¹. This has led to a strengthening of confidence by urban morphologists when exploring the issue of change in settlement morphology. For example, Kropf, drawing on both the British and Italian schools, suggests that change can best be explained in terms of human agency, the result of interaction of humans with their environment — an obvious point but a reminder that settlement form can only change “by humans expending physical and mental energy” (Kropf 2001, 33). The corollary is that such changes are the result of planning, because it is impossible to commit to any complex action without it. This is notwithstanding that the planned act may have a very narrow focus and the result of many narrowly planned acts in close proximity may result in a degree of chaos. In answer to this, Whitehead has suggested that in many instances individual actors may produce a surprisingly coherent result if the environmental factors are constant (Whitehead 2001, 108)². It is clear that change, now as in the past, has been the result of purposeful

1 The Italian school is based on the writings of Saverio Muratori and Gianfranco Caniggia. Although similar in substance they are expressed in slightly different ways and their ideas developed independently of Conzen. These ideas are now widely equated with those of the Conzenian tradition (Whitehand 2003).

2 In this sense ‘planning’ explains the thoughtful action of human agency, not to be confused with the concept of the ‘planned settlement’ indicating an holistic approach to the generation of a new settlement, or settlement extension.

human activity and is not as random as the frequently irregular and idiosyncratic results might make it appear to the casual observer³.

Although much that has been written about morphological change has been within an urban context, there is no reason to doubt that the same principles also apply to rural settlements. Change in the development of all settlements may reasonably be associated also with social and economic health: where growth and expansion are signs of vibrant and successful communities, whilst contraction is an indicator of social and economic decline. Understanding what changes have actually occurred, why they have happened and their impact on the community, will tell us something about the nature of the settlement itself. The desire to maximise the benefits of change, or minimise the detrimental effects of negative change, is an issue that has relevance in most European societies since at least medieval times. Practical efforts to influence the conduct and effects of change have led to much legislative regulation over the centuries. These historical processes have increased the complexity of regulation to its present day level (Manco 2009). As a result, twenty-first century society, reliant on an administrative system grounded in public bureaucracy, is heavily regulated.

ORIGINS OF REGULATION

From the modern perspective the past may appear to have been comparatively free of constraints associated with changes to settlement morphology. However, this is a misconception and there have been restrictions by regulation on development from at least the Middle Ages

³ It is accepted that some specific events were random, such as the destruction of property by fire (see C. R. J. Currie, 'Time and Chance: Modelling the Attrition Rates of Old Houses' *Vernacular Architecture* (1988), pp.1-9.). Clearly, also, such events could be far reaching on the occasions when a large number of buildings were destroyed at one time. However, equally, the result was to provide opportunities for planned remedial action and thus in the long term encouraged purposeful activity.

onwards. Historically, central and local government have imposed controls on what could be done in both rural and urban settings: for example, the practice of medieval landlords licensing the building of new houses on their land (Dyer 1986, 19-45). Other examples from this and other periods would include the detailed building regulations recorded in London as early as 1189-1216 (Riley 1861, 276-287), or the Building Act of 1774 which regulated (and consolidated previous regulations) concerning the city's building practices (Summerson 1969, 125). Many villages have also been planned; later examples (like the Rothschild estate village of Ashton in Northamptonshire) are well documented, whilst many earlier, medieval ones have been identified by archaeological and historical investigation (Taylor 1983, 125-150; Roberts 1972, 33-56; 1987). Some twelfth-century examples in Huntingdonshire are discussed in Chapter 7 and slightly later ones for the Weald in Chapter 12. Whilst local or national regulation has been enacted in a continuous stream down to the present day, regulatory restraint now is more extensive and probably more effective than in the past. Certainly the scope of the current planning regime is different today, but regulation is not new.

Other Restraints

Some of the restraints affecting the development and growth of settlements are resource and technology based. Until very recent times the resources needed for large-scale modifications to the terrain and extensive building schemes were comparatively greater than today in terms of manpower⁴. Furthermore, the level of technical development in previous ages determined the speed, and to some degree the scope of development

⁴ For example, in 1851 nearly 2,000 men and between 300 to 400 horses were needed to build the Shrewsbury to Ludlow railway, a distance of about 46km (Hereford Times, October 1851).

that could be accomplished. But this should not be taken as an indication of a lack of ability to engage with sophisticated planning of settlement or major engineering projects, as such. The complexities around the planning of medieval new towns, including the surveying techniques employed (Lilley 1998; Boerefijn 2000), as well as the socio-economic structures needed to implement the process (Slater 1986) are recognised and to a large degree understood⁵.

THE ADVENT OF MODERN PLANNING

Until the genesis of modern planning bureaucracies, responsibility for the development of a settlement's morphology was principally dependent on local actors, and only sometimes on national legislation. Where there was regulation it was provided partly by local byelaws and in many rural communities by manorial custom, with further restrictions placed on individual tenants by landlords. The availability of resources and their effective deployment within the technical competence of the times tended to result in a conservative approach to development.

The origins of the modern, top-down, planning system are to be found in the policy needs surrounding public health, resulting from rapid population growth and expansion of the built environment in the nineteenth century. The first national planning Act, in the modern sense — the Housing and Town Planning, etc., Act — was implemented in 1909 (Cullingworth and Nadin 1994, 1-2). The argument for comprehensive planning sponsored by central government had largely been championed in the late nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century by

⁵ See also the 'Mapping the Medieval Urban Landscape Project'; involving a sophisticated modelling process using GIS programming to record Edward I's new towns in England and Wales. 2003-2005 www.qub.ac.uk/urban_mapping/

determined individuals representing a wide range of interests (Sheail 2002, 17). As both local and central government continued to expand they took on more responsibility for initiating planning legislation during the interwar years. It was during this period that the need for tighter planning controls was recognised not just in urban areas but within the countryside as well, where issues such as ‘ribbon development’⁶, ‘plot-land settlements’⁷, and development associated with the growth of motor transport⁸ were of especial concern (Wild, 2004, 145/6 & 153-159). These developments were seen as an attack on rural England and vigorously opposed by many conservationists, planners and architects. In 1926, the planner Sir Patrick Abercrombie published *The Preservation of Rural England*, and two years later Clough Williams-Ellis published *England and the Octopus*, his attack on the growth of suburbia. Both authors were founder members of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England in 1926, an organisation committed to opposing the sorts of developments mentioned above. Although some progress was made in addressing these issues, regulation was often slow in coming or inadequate to the challenges of the time because their enactment was voluntary, so that the pre-war legislative response was often ineffectual. Ultimately, the outbreak of the Second World War precipitously halted the processes of peacetime change (Sheail 2002, 20-27).

During the Second World War, as planning became a major factor in the war-time work of government and an integral part of national life, its acceptability was given greater impetus. Every activity, which could be

6 The building of new development along arterial roads leading from existing settlements.

7 The erection of cheap and often rather temporary housing on plots of land secured for the purpose in often out of the way rural locations.

8 The erection of petrol stations, garages and cafes in unsuitable locations.

construed as having importance within a context of total warfare, was controlled by the State and subject to a rigorous planning regime. To take but one example, the County War Agricultural Executive Committees controlled agriculture meticulously, deciding what farmers could grow and even requisitioning their land on occasions. Matless (1998, 173–176) has pointed out the discrepancy between the official view of this arrangement in the Ministry of Information’s publication *Land at War* (London 1945) and the views of others on this subject, notably Wentworth Day who wrote in his book *History of the Fens*:

All through the War the so-called experts of the County War Agricultural Executive Committees — some of whom had never farmed in their lives or had lost money at it and were therefore glad to get a paid job — ordered farmers about... they told farmers what to grow, and, if he disobeyed, they kicked him out of his house and land — without the right of appeal to an independent tribunal. They are still with us.⁹
(Wentworth Day 1954, 256)

By 1945, the value of advanced planning for the governance of the country was firmly entrenched with policy-makers, and this view would survive into the immediate post-war era — one outcome of which was the Town and Country Planning Acts of 1947¹⁰. These key Acts placed the whole country within “a comprehensive system of compulsory development control imposed by the state and managed by the municipal and county authorities” (Wild 2004, 149). The planning regime initiated in post-war Britain was a comprehensive national system of planning, development and

⁹ In one instant, an unlucky farmer had his land requisitioned for refusing to plough up his pasture to plant sugar beet — ironically, the crop was never lifted because the tractors could not cope with the waterlogged Wealden clay! (Personal comment by S. Saggars, Rolvenden farmer, 2009).

¹⁰ These included not only the Town and Country Planning Act, but also the Distribution of Industry Acts, the National Parks and Access to Countryside Acts, the New Town Acts and the Town Development Act. (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1994, p.10).

building control, a new beginning not just a continuation of the pre-war process — effectively the ‘nationalisation’ of development rights (Larkham 2005, 3-14). The system worked through the operation of two complimentary processes: the first being development plans drawn up by local authorities showing proposed land-use for each area and, secondly, the requirement for planning permission for all intended development (Fairbrother, 1972, 163). Although there have been many subsequent adaptations to the planning system set up by the 1947 Acts to meet new challenges and changing political and social expectations, the essential structure has remained the same.

CHALLENGES OF THE POST-WAR ERA

Planning law and other post-war reforms were not just the carry-over of wartime planning habits endorsed by public servants and politicians, at a time when planning itself had come to be viewed as a moral issue (Larkham 2005, 3-14). They were welcomed and deemed necessary, also, by ordinary people with great expectations because they, too, recognised the challenges ahead. In the England of 1945 the end of the War in Europe on the 8th May brought a welcome relief from the immediate fear of further destruction to the fabric of the country, whilst the surrender of Japan on the 2nd September allowed the release of an amazing optimism. The mood of the country concerning peoples’ aspirations for the future can be gauged from the literature of the time, both from that produced whilst hostilities still raged and into the first decade of peace. The first point to note is that the social interplay between people and events during the course of the War (especially those on the ‘home front’ and particularly in the early years of the blitz) was complex: it demonstrated a permanent shift of social and

political opinion, which culminated in the Labour victory of 1945. In the words of David Matless:

Themes of 'never before' and 'never again' emerge well before 1945 — never again a return to the poverty and perceived chaos of the 1930s, never again such an opportunity to make a new country. Well before the military outcome is clear, plans are drafted for a reconstructed world to come. No sooner are buildings flattened than visions of replacement emerge. (Matless, 1998, 189)

The spirit of the time was displayed in a wide range of publications from an equally disparate range of supporters and sceptics of proposed planning initiatives: publications (official and otherwise) from government and professional bodies, contemporary literary figures, and even soap manufacturers¹¹. The list is legion, but the emphasis is on a brave new world that will overcome previous deficiencies and wipe away the old (although the latter was not welcomed by everyone). The new breed of architects of the Modern Movement most evocatively projected the temper of the day and it was Modernism that caught the spirit of the age and gave it an identity. However, the effects of trying to implement these reforms, the attempt to create a genuinely new beginning for the Nation, often created unexpected (and sometimes unwanted) results. Furthermore, not all the challenges facing rural settlement were fully appreciated until later, and Modernism did not prove to have all the answers (Watkin 2001, 192).

¹¹ For example: *Rebuilding Britain* (London, 1943), Royal Institute of British Architects; Betjeman, *English Cities and Small Towns* (London, 1943); Sharp, *Exeter Phoenix: a Plan for Rebuilding* (London, 1946); and, of course the Pears Soap advertisements that appeared on the back covers of various editions of the Geographical Magazine in 1941, at the height of the Blitz, which extolled the virtues of the towns and roads etc. of the future.

EFFECT OF POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION ON RURAL SETTLEMENT MORPHOLOGY

The Urban Experience

The impact of reconstruction on the historical environment was not perceived in the immediate post-war period, but in hindsight it is easy to understand why this was overlooked. By 1945, the urban fabric seemed (almost literally) worn out, particularly in the industrial cities inherited from the Victorian Age. The main concern at the time lay with the need to repair physical damage caused by the War itself, and the need to modernise and re-invest in the economy after a period of neglect and the effects of wartime depreciation. In their *County of London Plan*, Forshaw and Abercrombie wrote:

London was ripe for reconstruction before the war; obsolescence, bad and unsuitable housing, inchoate communities, uncorrelated road systems, inequality in the distribution of open spaces, increasing congestion of dismal journeys to work — all these and more clamoured for improvement before the enemy's efforts to smash us by air attack stiffened our resistance and intensified our zeal for reconstruction. (Forshaw & Abercrombie 1943, 20)

These sentiments could be repeated for every other major British city, and over the period they frequently were. Areas within our inner cities that today we might see as having intrinsic historic worth were perceived as degenerate and few at the time mourned their passing. The argument was not whether these areas should be redeveloped and reconstructed, but rather how, and the winners were mainly the modernist architects working in conjunction with the town planners (Rykwert 1996, 134-136).

Effect on the Rural Landscape

The importance of the urban experience of post-war reconstruction was that it set the precedent for what was considered acceptable in planning terms, with the emphasis on the built form and spatial re-ordering of the townscape without necessarily much regard for the wider and pre-existing morphology. Inevitably this approach spilt over into the built environment of other areas, particularly market towns, but also other rural settlements.

Social conditions were also of grave concern within rural areas, which had been subjected to the cyclical agricultural depressions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Flinn 1962, 300-310). Between the First World War and the Second, rural England had moved from being in a generally depressed state as a result of its economic dependency on agriculture, to one of transition with some places benefiting from new economic possibilities brought by such agencies as the motor car and suburbanisation (Wild, 2004, 114). Post-1945 the emphasis of rural policy was on food production and the reform of agricultural practices, which reflected much of what had been proposed in the *Report of the Committee on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas* (The Scott Report, 1942), a compromise between the proponents for a modern agricultural industry and the preservationists (Matless, 1998, 220/1). This raises issues that are dealt with in more detail in the following chapter, but it is important to note here that whilst contemporary rural policy was greatly concerned with agricultural production, other development concerns were dealt with separately under the 1947 Planning Acts — a state of affairs that left policy for rural settlements uncoordinated.

The organisation of policy areas at governmental level reflected how the various interest groups were organised, but also the categories within which academic and professional debate subsisted. There was a palpable

clash of interests involving economists, those interested in land utilization,¹² the advocates of progressive and industrialized agriculture, and conservationists (or 'preservationists' as they were then called). The concept of 'rural affairs' (the complex interplay of social welfare for rural populations, the physical condition of the rural built environment, the interests of the urban population in the countryside for recreation, the conservation of traditional rural life and aesthetics) were somehow divorced from the needs and (as many saw it) the desirability of creating a robust agricultural industry free from the cultural trammels of the past (Matless, 1998, 218-221). The new agriculture depended very largely for its success on mechanisation and the reduced need for labour (Fairbrother, 1972, 64 & 76/7). This robust and productive agricultural movement was one element (but a significant one) in the process of separating the economic dependency of the majority of those living within rural settlements on agriculture.

The Concept of Key Growth Areas

At the same time the development of post-war planning structures sowed the seeds of change within the fabric of the built environment of rural settlements in a number of ways (Dudley Stamp 1961, 125-130). For the first time settlement in rural areas began to be defined for planning purposes that would eventually affect the way individual settlements would develop (Cullingworth & Nadin, 1994, 9). Initially a selected few rural settlements were characterised as 'key settlements' for rural growth (usually the market towns and larger villages), with the majority designated as low or non-growth settlements (overwhelmingly the smaller villages) and this

¹² In particular L Dudley Stamp, editor of the influential nine volume report *The Land of Britain*, published in 1942.

classification directed new development to a comparatively few places. In the immediate aftermath of the War much of this new development was council housing, which between the wars was fairly ubiquitous but now was concentrated more selectively into the key growth settlements (Wild, 2004, 153). Whilst this policy made the provision of services and infrastructure easier and more economical in general terms it also, in effect, exacerbated the problems of rural decline in the smaller settlements. The need to increase house building had become urgent by the 1950's and this led to deregulation, particularly for private housing schemes, and the result was a dramatic rise in the number of houses actually built nationally. However, the impact on rural settlements was relatively more pronounced because the newly adopted national development policies presumed against the expansion of existing urban conurbations in favour of the development of towns in rural areas (such as St Neots, for example) and the establishment of 'new towns', typically situated near existing rural settlements: for example, Crawley, Stevenage and Milton Keynes (Fairbrother 1972, 165). Some rural areas were given extra protection by the creation of National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations, and, from 1955, the creation of Green Belts around London and other major conurbations (Cullingworth & Nadin 1994, 10-12).

URBANISATION OF RURAL SETTLEMENT

As the country slowly recovered economically from the War and as changes in social expectations arose with the post-war generations, the emphasis on reconstruction gave way to the need to foster economic growth and provide citizens with opportunities for personal fulfilment (Patmore 1972, 2-4). This further exposed rural settlement to pressures from demographic changes and the effects of increased urbanisation.

Demography and Socio-Economic Factors

Domestic structural changes in English national demography influenced the pattern of development. The steady rise in the total population for England over the period is clearly a primary cause for an expansion of the built environment¹³. Changes to the demographic *profile* of the population, however, have accentuated the increased demand for homes over and above what would be expected if the population numbers were rising but other factors were to stay the same. A major factor has been a decline in the size of households over the last fifty years. The national average of persons per dwelling in 1951 was 4.7, whilst by 1991 it had diminished to 2.4 (Cooper 2004); by 2001 this had dropped further to 2.2 persons per dwelling (Walton 2000, 47). This means that many more homes would be needed even if the total population had remained static.

Simultaneously, social expectations in terms of accessibility to services and personal mobility have further influenced the design, location, and density patterns of new development (Cooper 2004). Social expectations have been extensively re-moulded by increased car ownership and the effects of these on urban design have been unexpected and far-reaching. For example, it is now recognised that people walk shorter distances than they once did before deciding to drive to a destination, and many people expect to drive and are unwilling to walk¹⁴. Consequently, higher densities of dwellings are needed if local services are to be supported by pedestrians (Walton 2000, 46-50).

¹³ In England, now standing at approximately 50 million persons, a rise of 17% since 1951 (Office of National Statistics).

¹⁴ Approximately 2,000 metres is the average maximum comfortable walking distance, and local retailers will expect a customer base of at least 600 people within a 400 metre walking distance (a density of 100 people/45 units per hectare) — [Cooper 2004].

At the same time, the delivery of services such as health and education need larger populations to support them in order to be cost effective, especially as schools and hospitals grow in size and complexity. For many settlements in rural areas this means some essential services, that until comparatively recently were locally based, are now located many miles away (Wild 2004, 162).

The result of demographic policy pressures on the design of the built environment (for example, the desire to reduce car usage and the implementation of the economics of scale) have resulted in government requirements for developers and planners to follow rigorous guidelines on housing density, design and the location of services (for the background to this see Sheail 2002, 182-191). These guidelines are applied equally to rural as well as urban locations but the effects have been unevenly distributed. Arguably, there is now greater inconvenience and increased expense for dwellers in rural locations, where the result has been to slow the building of affordable dwellings in areas of low density populations, whilst at the same time market forces have tended to favour the provision of homes for wealthier people who can afford the additional expense of living in the countryside (Wild 2004, 158-163).

Arguably, a settlement can be considered to be truly rural where the dominant socio-economic relationship is dependence on the land itself. That is, when the majority of the inhabitants are employed directly in agriculture, other land-based activities or supporting services (whether commercial, retail, welfare, and industrial) concerned with the local economy. In the past, these elements of rural economic and social organisation formed an integrated system that provided the local inhabitants with their livelihoods and effectively integrated habitation into

the countryside itself. However, by the 1970s, only 3.5% of the population worked on the land and by the 1980s this had dropped to just over 2% (Fairbrother 1972, 86; Phillips & Williams 1984, 27). It is clear that today in socio-economic terms many previously rural settlements have lost their connection with the countryside. The point at which a settlement is deemed to have 'tipped over' from being economically and socially a rural one to becoming an urban one is debatable but, by this measure, there are probably few truly rural settlements left.

The urbanisation of rural settlement is more widely the result of an advanced industrialised economy (Fairbrother 1972, 105). The result of urbanisation in rural areas is that as these communities have ceased to be dependent economically on the produce of the lands within which they are situated, the settlements these communities inhabit have lost their economic relationship with the land itself. In effect the countryside has increasingly become a rustic backdrop to an expanded built environment, instead of an integral part of settlement, as has been the case in rural areas in the past.

The effects of post-war changes in demographics have favoured the process of widespread urbanisation, perhaps now the greatest challenge to the historic pattern of settlement morphology. The urbanisation of rural settlement is partly the result of the migration of population from existing urban centres — often referred to as 'counter-urbanisation'. However, the process is a complex one and does not directly account for the penetration of incomers to the more isolated rural communities (Hill 2003, 104-108).

Technological Change

A further impetus to the urbanisation of settlement in rural areas has been the increased capacity of new building techniques, which have

radically influenced rural settlement because they have enabled rapid and extensive development (Wild 2004, 165/6). As a result the total mass of the built environment in many rural settlements now often dwarfs the original settlement size. Consequently, the past morphologies that have characterised particular rural settlements have been fundamentally altered by the scale and volume of modern development. These changes often impact visually because of the different building styles, materials and spatial elements (such as plot size, development 'grain' and street layout) employed in recent developments compared to older ones.

Other aspects of technological change have contributed to an urban feel to many rural settlements — for example, the ability of earth-moving machinery to remodel landscape on a large scale; the replacement of traditional building techniques (the breathing building) by modern methods (the water-proofed building) and a greater emphasis on internal comfort at the expense (often) of external aesthetics (Wild 2004, 163-174).

CONCLUSION

Change within landscape and settlement morphology is the direct result of human activity, and is an historical process that implies a level of planning. The regulation of change within settlement morphology is present in past ages, although the form it takes has varied over time — in the modern period this has developed into the bureaucratic process found in our contemporary democratic state. The development of modern planning structures is largely a response to the increase of development pressures on existing settlement patterns during the twentieth century. The growth of planning law during the 1920s and 1930s reflected the increased scale of development at that time, as the rapid expansion of planning structures following the Second World War indicates the scale of contemporary

development. Whilst it is true that pre-war pressures of development on established settlement grew, it tended to be concentrated in particular areas — for example, on the outskirts of the major urban centres. What singles out the post-war situation is that development pressures became more ubiquitous, affecting both rural and urban areas.

Post-war urbanisation of rural settlement manifests itself in a number of ways. These include the amalgamation of settlements through development growth, the separation of workspaces and living spaces (often by many miles) and the loss of economic connection of settlement in rural areas between habitation and its landscape context. In particular, as agriculture becomes less dependent on local labour and the management and organisation of agri-industry is removed from the locality where the farming takes place, rural settlements have ceased to be places where communities dependent on the land reside. Rural settlements have tended to become refuges from, or dormitories for, larger urban settlements elsewhere, and the inhabitants of rural settlements have needed to seek employment in non-rural industries.

As socio-economic change in the countryside took effect, an awareness grew during the 1960s that the historic fabric of our rural and urban settlements were being badly eroded by immediate post-war development. It is now over forty years since these concerns were put into legislative form through the passing of the Civic Amenities Act in 1965 and much has happened since then. How the historic environment is understood, analysed and defined, however, has become an issue of importance.

CHAPTER 3: CONSERVATION, THE PLANNING REGIME AND CONTEMPORARY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

*'I stood with him one day looking southward down the Saltdean Valley to the sea. In his day he had seen it green with downland turf and dotted with sheep, ploughed into rich brown ribs like corduroy and waving fair with yellow corn, but now the brick and mortar excrescences of speculative builders were spreading along the valley and up the hillside at an alarming rate. He looked silently for a while, leaning on his stick, then, "I dunno what my ol' Daddy would say, boy. Look at it. 'Ouses, 'ouses, 'ouses — that makes me prostrate with dismal'"*¹

¹ reported by Bob Copper of his grandfather, James Copper (1882-1954) in a *Song for Every Season*, 1972, Newton Abbot.

INTRODUCTION

The industrial revolution led to a period of dynamic change to settlement morphology in both town and country. From the late eighteenth century changes to the built environment accelerated in many places. Industrialised cities like London and Birmingham, and the new industrial cities such as Manchester and Leeds, formed urbanised centres with rising populations that together increased the population of Britain threefold between 1800 and 1880 (Flinn 1962, 332)². During the same period, rural areas tended to suffer under-investment and many rural settlements, including country towns, suffered severe decline as their populations moved away to find work (Phillips and Williams 1984, 74-75; Jones 2000, 78)³. The effects of this unparalleled growth in the cities and the decline in rural areas caught the attention of the elite minds of the age. Men and women who were determined, for the good of the Nation, to involve themselves in the cause of the protection of historic buildings, open spaces and the countryside.

During the nineteenth century there was a great deal of interest in, and work to develop, conservation philosophies and organisations aimed at the protection and management of historical environments, both rural and urban. The impetus to conserve flowed into the next century, building on the legacy of the nineteenth-century pioneers, resulting in a raft of legislation, and statutory and voluntary interventions. Over the last twenty years the momentum has increased, with the publication of guidance

² The census returns for 1801 (the first national census) recorded a population for Great Britain of 10.5 millions. By 1881 this had risen to 29.7 millions (Flinn 1962, 332).

³ For example, the rural population of Huntingdonshire (including that of the market towns, excepting Ramsey) declined during the course of the nineteenth century (Jones 2000, 78). By the end of the nineteenth century Britain had proportionally the highest percentage of urbanised population in the world (Phillips & Williams 1984, 74).

documents, government advice and tools to aid research and understanding, aimed at affecting management practices at local level. This chapter examines the achievements of the impetus to conserve and manage over the last 200 years.

The Impetus to Conserve

To understand the management of change in the historical environment in the contemporary context it is helpful to take a critical look at three related themes. The first of these is the history of conservation philosophy and practice relating to the built environment since the late eighteenth century. This activity underpinned the evolving planning law — the framework for the management of the historical built environment. The second is the history of the preservation of spatial elements within the countryside over a similar period — this provided the structure for the management of historical landscapes. The two come together, in the contemporary period, partly as a result of the synthesis of different elements of planning and development policy in the early years of the twenty-first century. The third theme of this chapter is a critique of contemporary policies and practices in the management of the historical environment itself. This includes a discussion of ‘heritage protection’ and ‘historical landscape protection’, which includes research into and the development of analytical tools to describe landscape, including Historical Landscape Characterisation and Landscape Character Assessment.

THEME 1 — HISTORY OF CONSERVATION PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE RELATING TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

Conservation in the Built Environment prior to 1877

The practice of assessing, preserving or restoring important buildings goes back to at least the time of Sir Christopher Wren (1631-1723), whose detailed reports on principle London buildings destroyed or damaged during the Great Fire of 1666 set a new standard of architectural recording (Abbott 2002). While ‘conservation’ as a concept is a comparatively new idea that has emerged slowly over the last two hundred years, it had its proponents and practitioners — of the very highest quality — at least 100 years before.

‘Conservation’ covered then, and still covers, a wide range of activities and interests. For example, works of art, public collections and public statues were the subjects of legal protection from about 1845 (Hunt 1998). However, the term is usually more readily associated with the preservation of historic buildings and ancient monuments, broader aspects of settlement forms and the built environment like conservation areas, but also landscape and nature conservation.

It was not until the impact of the Industrial Revolution started to be felt more widely during the course of the nineteenth century that architects, artists, craftsmen and others sought to harness principles of conservation in defence of major historic monuments (particularly churches), which were considered to be under threat. Worries over how the Nation’s ancient churches were being ‘improved’ became the central issue of dissent for those opposed to what they considered an aggressive approach to restoration; and the argument to conserve rather than improve ancient buildings gained

ground in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was eventually crystallized by the renowned letter of William Morris (1834-1896) to The Athenaeum written on the 5th March 1877, which led directly to the founding of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings [SPAB] (Pickard 1996, 143). The content of the SPAB Manifesto written by Morris later in 1877 reflected aspects of the philosophies of A W N Pugin (1812–1852), architect and designer, and John Ruskin (1819–1900), art critic and social thinker, poet and artist — as well as tackling the practicalities of conservation and restoration.⁴

The root of this debate between the ‘preservers’ and the ‘restorers’ reaches back to the closing years of the eighteenth century, was complex and far-reaching. At one level it was manifest in the exchanges between differing schools of thought on architectural style, but underneath was a wider concern over the deep economic and social effects of industrialisation and urbanisation⁵.

"Battle of the Styles"

Early in the nineteenth century a reaction had set in against what some saw as the architectural conformity of the Georgian period and the development of a more decadent style — the ‘picturesque’⁶. An increased knowledge of the architecture of past ages (particularly that of the Middle Ages) together with greater archaeological expertise encouraged those dissatisfied with the classical and picturesque to postulate the creation of a

⁴ The SPAB manifesto’s position as an icon of conservation practice has allowed it to set the tone for the modern conservation movement and as such it has been immensely influential. A more detailed examination of the impact of SPAB is given in Appendix A.

⁵ For example, as typified in the writings of Pugin, *Contrasts* (1836) and *The True Principles of Christian Pointed Architecture* (1841).

⁶ A term applied to romanticised styles of painting, landscape gardening and architecture. Popularised by Gilpin in 1772 and popular into the early years of the nineteenth-century.

new architectural style. Unsurprisingly, there was no consensus about what that new style should be and for the greater part of the century there raged a vigorous “battle of the styles” (Sutton 1999, 268-283).

This was, however, not just a disagreement about the nature of architectural form: the debate was founded on a belief that the way society constructed the built environment reflected the principles and values underlying that society (Watkin 2001, 156-157). The “battle of the styles” was a dimension of a contest between rival philosophies contesting the sort of society that Victorians should be attempting to establish. The debate was so potent because it was set within the social and political context of the great challenges of the day: Imperialism, urbanisation, industrialisation and immigration (O’Day 1990).

The “battle of the styles” debate became more significant because of unprecedented building necessitated by the social needs of a rapidly rising population and the demands of industrial and commercial expansion. New churches and the refurbishment of existing ones was a significant element in this building programme because organised religion was seen as the major force for the social and moral well being of a rapidly changing society. Churches became the focus of the debate because their form reflected the different approaches to moral authority in society. Although civic, industrial, commercial, and domestic architecture were also influenced by this debate, the “battle of the styles” was fought out principally within the context of church building and restoration — and when ancient churches were restored the debate frequently became heated.

It was through differences in churchmanship that the philosophical diversity of the parties was articulated. The two great standard bearers were Pugin and Ruskin. Pugin saw architecture as a concrete expression of a

social gospel with a moral force of its own; Ruskin also expressed his architectural beliefs philosophically but in support of a differently nuanced morality (Ruskin 1849; 1851-3). Both were prolific and influential writers who not only wrote about architectural aesthetics, but also vehemently expressed their views in an ecclesiological context that should be understood in order to fully comprehend the spirit of the age.⁷

Industrialisation and urbanisation became increasingly the subjects of hostile (and often immoderate) criticism by an aesthetic elite with a strong preference for the re-establishment of some sort of rural idyll (Morris 1891; Naylor 2004). Morris, co-founder of the Arts and Craft Movement subscribed to this school of thought. It is not difficult, therefore, to understand his antagonism to many of the practices of architects such as Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) whose work, more than anyone else's, came to symbolise the ruthless restoration so abhorred by Morris.

Restorers v Preservers

The contemporary argument was between the Restorers (known as the 'scrapers') and the Preservers (known as the 'anti-scrapers'). The Restorers saw ancient or historic buildings as legitimate material for fulfilling a contemporary need: however, the results of the process of modifying existing buildings for continued use were often intrusive and in some cases so intrusive that the original was completely remodelled. Against this, stood those opposed to Restoration, who viewed such buildings as cultural objects to be preserved as statements of past achievements for the enlightenment of contemporary and future generations.

⁷ In the nineteenth-century, a person's ecclesiology (their understanding of the nature and function of the Church) usually also reflected their political, moral, and spiritual beliefs.

In 1877, when Morris first promulgated his Manifesto the issues may have seemed unambiguous. He and many of the other 'anti-scrapers' were appalled at the urbanisation of the country at large and the loss of the rural idyll. They were suspicious of the impact of science and the new technologies and dreamed of holding back the tide of modernity. The preservation of ancient buildings from Restorers and other promoters of change looked attractive and possible.

If Scott came to represent the despised Restorers, then his death in 1878 perhaps symbolises the eventual demise of the concept of Victorian Restoration. However, professional architects in the mould of Scott were also the people who championed the recording of historic buildings, archaeological investigation, the study of design and the history of architecture.

Conservation in the Built Environment 1877-1990

Conservation of the built environment during the nineteenth century was almost exclusively concerned with individual buildings or closely related complexes. Redevelopment sometimes became an issue where the future well-being of established monuments were involved, but new build was usually on green field sites the loss of which was deplored for reasons other than a strong feeling for the historical environment as such. Debates about the form and design of new buildings and their fitness for purpose were significant at the time, but not generally on environmental grounds. It was not until the second half of the twentieth century that, in relation to the existing historical built environment, the contribution of landscape context and impact of the broader built environment were to become matters for serious consideration by legislators.

Protecting Ancient Monuments

Five years after SPAB was founded The Ancient Monument Act (1882) was passed. Under this Act — the first formal protection for ancient monuments in this country — only 68 monuments were scheduled, of which 29 were in England and most of these were prehistoric monuments⁸. Further Acts designed to protect ancient monuments followed at regular intervals down to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. As time went by protection was extended to other buildings of significance, but it is salutary to recall that it was not until the 1932 Town and Country Planning Act that protection was possible for inhabited houses. The present process for listing buildings of special architectural or historic interest was initiated in the Town and Country Planning Act 1944 with various supplementary legislation being enacted up to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. (Abbott 2002, Appendix 1).

The processes for protecting ancient monuments and the listing of historic buildings operate in parallel and, of course, it is possible for a scheduled ancient monument to be listed as well. But most scheduled monuments are principally archaeological sites (that is, not habitable buildings) and their protection has more to do with our archaeological heritage.

The Buildings-led Approach

During the twentieth century the evolving legislative framework has given local planners, archaeologists and building conservationists the principal responsibility for the protection of the historical environment.

⁸ The first Director responsible for the scheduling procedure was the famous archaeologist, General Pitt-Rivers. Notably, historic churches in use were excluded from the provisions of the Act.

This legislative history is important because it sets the ground rules for the methodology to be adopted in conservation matters and the precedent for legal protection within the planning process. This was the buildings-led approach that is still paramount today, although the tendency over the years has been to extend protection to cover the wider aspects of historical environment. However, it is arguable that the grain of the basic (buildings-led) conservation process is not ideally suited to this broader purpose. The approach works better in the urban context, where by definition there is a predominance of built historic environment, but it is less well adapted to rural settlement where landscape setting is all-important.

The Protection of Space around Buildings

The system for protecting buildings and monuments was soon found to be less effective than first hoped. This was because the legislation did not take account of their context. It was eventually realised that open land around buildings can be as crucial to the integrity of the built environment as the buildings that sit within it. However, the protection of space was only granted grudgingly and even now can be a contentious issue amongst planners, developers and the general public⁹.

The first tentative step towards extending the conservation horizon was taken in 1931 when local authorities were empowered to protect the *surroundings* of scheduled sites (Ancient Monuments Act 1931), and the following year this was extended to inhabited buildings and groups of buildings. Thirty years later, the importance of the relationship between buildings was further strengthened in 1964 when the Courts first recognised

⁹ For example, during a public consultation process organised by the author at Ramsey, issues were raised concerning the inclusion of farmed fenland into the proposed conservation area (Huntingdonshire District Council 2005).

that neighbouring buildings, although not necessarily worthy of listing individually, could be sufficiently of special architectural or historic interest to be listed as a group (Journal of Planning Law 395)¹⁰.

In 1965, the Council of British Archaeology (CBA) published a *List of Historic Towns*. This was designed to ‘assist’ the Government of the day to see the importance of whole townscapes based on historic road networks and other historical factors besides just architecture. It was a serious attempt to rally support for legislation to protect historic urban centres, by that time much ravished by post-war reconstruction.

Conservation Areas

In 1967, the Civic Amenities Act was passed, setting up the first Conservation Areas. This was steered as a Private Member’s Bill through the Parliament by Duncan Sandys, MP (previously Minister of Housing and Local Government and President of the Civic Trust). The main thrust of the legislation was to allow local authorities to designate areas within their districts that deserved conservation because of their special architectural or historic interest (much the same criteria as for listed buildings) [Pickard 1996, 214].

Although there was much sense in giving local planning authorities (LPAs) the duty to designate and manage conservation areas, the normal practice within individual local authorities was to entrust building conservation officers with the responsibility for these new powers. This tended to perpetuate the buildings-orientated approach. Consequently the emphasis was, too often, on the architectural specialness rather than the historical specialness, as most conservation officers were not trained to

¹⁰ Iveagh v. Minister of Housing and Local Government (1964)

discern the latter. As a result, the boundaries of the earlier designations in rural areas were placed to capture the maximum range of listed buildings and too often ignored the historical morphology of the settlement (English Heritage 1993).

The first designated Conservation Areas following the 1967 Act were Bath, Chester, Chichester and York — all high quality historic urban environments. By 1994 there were 8,000 conservation areas protecting mainly rural settlements and some urban centres that had not originated as major medieval urban centres¹¹. With such a great increase in designations it is not difficult to comprehend the concern of some that the original concept of conservation area *specialness* may become undermined. These fears are understandable where that *specialness*, as required by the Act, is perceived principally by the visual quality of the architecture and not sufficiently in terms of the *historical specialness* of the settlement.¹²

Nineteen-ninety saw the passing of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. This consolidated previous legislation referring to conservation areas passed since the Civic Amenities Act. It also generally strengthened an LPA's responsibilities regarding conservation areas. The process of managing conservation areas was put on a much firmer policy

¹¹ English Heritage updated this figure in February 2006, when there were more than 9,100 designated conservation areas. (English Heritage, February 2006, page 4).

¹² For example, the legitimacy of some conservation areas have also been called into question by conservation officers where many of the unlisted buildings have been compromised by an accumulation of minor (permitted) changes to their structures. This criticism is often ignorant of the morphological reasons for designation. On the positive side such material erosion of architectural quality has led to the introduction of Article 4 directions. These enable LPAs or the Secretary of State to withdraw a range of permitted development rights (that is, development that does not require formal planning consent). Regrettably, many LPAs are reluctant to adopt these new powers and architecture continues to be eroded in these areas. Guidance on the use of Article 4 directives is contained in *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas* (English Heritage 2006, 16-19).

basis by the publication of *Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment* (1994), which was a direct result of the 1990 Act.

Following the 1990 Act, English Heritage has been instrumental in promoting a much broader based conservation policy on protecting, preserving and developing the historical environment. This guidance, aimed at encouraging LPAs to explore and implement best practice on conservation area management and appraisal, was rather tentative at first but has improved over time (English Heritage 1993; 1997; 2006).

THEME 2 — PRESERVATION OF SPATIAL ELEMENTS WITHIN THE COUNTRYSIDE

As conservation policy was evolving for the built environment, a parallel process was unfolding in relation to the spatial environment. Two main themes within the rural agenda emerged: one was concerned with the preservation of spatial assets (for example, commons, footpaths and outstanding landscapes), public access to them, nature conservation, and, later, a strong desire to protect the countryside from uncontrolled development and the effects of urbanisation. Consequently, during the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, open spaces like greens (many of which were within or near settlement centres) as well as the open countryside itself, came to be treated as separate entities from the built environment in which, increasingly, the majority of people actually lived and worked (Flinn 1962, 332-341; Phillips & Williams 1984, 74-75). The countryside was often seen as an asset that should be preserved and to which people should be granted at least conditional access (Patmore 1972, 1-25).

A second theme concerned the economic viability of rural settlements and the quality of life of those living and working in the countryside. Agriculture and other kinds of countryside activities were thought of as a special type of economic system that needed supporting with its own set of rules (National Archives website, AH/30, October 2010). Thus countryside and rural interests have tended to concentrate primarily on the uses of, and the economic and social opportunities arising from the land itself.

Neither of these themes was mutually exclusive and there was always room for conflict. Although the processes at work have tended to converge, separate policy-making frameworks have developed to deliver the very different objectives needed for each of them. Conservation of the historical rural environment was often incidental to these perspectives, if it was considered at all. This has complicated attempts to create a seamless synergy between conservation of the built environment and conservation of the natural environment.

Preservation of Spatial Assets

The first notable foray into the preservation of open spaces arose out of the Enclosure Movement¹³ as it was experienced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries — the creation of a landscape of agricultural improvement (Barrell 1972, 64-97). This was very disruptive both during its implementation and, in the longer term, on those (often the poorest) who had previously benefited from open commons (Beckett et al 1998). This divisive and complex issue had profound affects on the English countryside (Barrell 1972, 98-105); and, indeed, on the development of our industrial

¹³ The enclosure of previously open land for farming is very old and occurs in many forms over long periods of time. What is meant here by the 'Enclosure Movement' is the accelerated enclosure of open fields and common land, either by statute or private agreement, between about 1750 and 1850 (Williamson 2000).

towns as well (Hoskins 1955, 279-289). Enclosure prompted the formation of the first preservation alliances¹⁴, which were initially concerned with the plight of the remaining common land in and around conurbations like London. However, access and the maintenance of public rights of way also became important objectives of these alliances.¹⁵ Concern for places such as Hampstead Heath had become part of a wider movement to preserve the remaining commons within the Capital from enclosure. In 1865, the supporters of the preservation of open spaces in London had formed themselves into The Commons Preservation Society, and in 1866 an Act was passed that prevented further enclosure of common land within the Metropolitan Police Area (Bassett 1980)¹⁶.

The Commons Preservation Society was well supported and founder members included Octavia Hill (1838-1912) and Robert Hunter (1844-1913), who were also subsequently to become co-founders of the National Trust in 1895. Other founder members were John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) philosopher, and George John Shaw-Lefevre, 1st Baron Eversley (1831-1928) who as a Liberal MP in Gladstone's government was Commissioner of Works at the Board of Trade and was instrumental in opening Regent's Park, Hampton Court Park and Kew Gardens to the general public. The Commons Preservation Society went on to save other significant open spaces such as Ashdown Forest and the Malvern Hills. Most of the existing

14 Open Spaces Society official history, www.oss.org.uk/history/history.htm

15 The vulnerability of London's commons came to the attention of the general public in 1829 when the Lord of the Manor of Hampstead, Sir Thomas Maryon-Wilson, was attempting to break the entail on his estate to enable him to build on it. Influential local residents, fearing that he also intended to enclose and build on the Heath itself, opposed him. Successive attempts by Sir Thomas to acquire a Parliamentary Act to enable his plans to be carried forward failed. Sir Thomas died in 1868 succeeded by his brother John, who in 1871 made over the Lordship of the Manor to the Metropolitan Board of Works, thus securing Hampstead Heath for Londoners.

16 29&30 Vict. Metropolitan Commons Act (1866).

great open spaces in and around London that are enjoyed today were the subjects of this great nineteenth-century preservation movement. These include icons like Epping Forest — the care of which was given over to the City of London by the Epping Forest Act, 1878 (Bassett 1980).

The Commons Act of 1876 extended the protection that the 1866 Act had conferred on London to commons in rural areas, but the most significant aspect of the 1876 Act was that by it “common land became, not a manorial, but rather a community appurtenance” (Birtles 2003, 221). The Act built upon the limited protection given to the rights of the community in commons by the Inclosure Act of 1845, which although primarily about making enclosure less difficult, had the result of creating a new legal definition of what was common land. Also, in the process, it protected village greens and created workers’ allotments upon new enclosure as a way of supporting the interests of the labouring classes. The political debates of the time, focused as they were on such issues of the Common Good and the bettering of the labouring classes (Birtles 2003, 211-221), reflected similar sentiments as those expressed through the discourses regarding the moral force of architecture on society. Finally the public interest in commons was endorsed when under the Local Government Act of 1894 local councils were given powers to manage allotments, commons and village greens¹⁷.

Opposition to further enclosure of common land was paralleled by opposition to the closing of public rights of way that also often accompanied Parliamentary inclosure. The Highways Act 1815 allowed closures and diversions to the public Highway, bridleways and footpaths to be

¹⁷ Memorandum as to the Powers and Duties of Parish Councils and Parish meetings, under the Local Government Act, 1894, with respect to Rights of Way, Roadside Wastes, Commons, Village Greens, and Recreation Grounds. Local Government Board March 1895.

determined locally at the Quarter Sessions¹⁸. Those concerned with the preservation of “ancient footpaths” began to organise themselves into associations, the first being founded at York in 1824. Typically these were formed by city dwellers keen to encourage and maintain access to the countryside. In 1884 the National Footpaths Preservation Society was formed. The campaigns for the preservation of open spaces and footpaths came together in 1899 with the formation of one organisation, now known as the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society — abbreviated to the Open Spaces Society (Bassett 1980). Many of those involved with the campaign for the preservation and access to open spaces were wealthy and influential members of the social elite, but the support from more humble members of the general public was present too and made for a genuine national movement.

The National Trust

For some, influencing policy and maintaining (and even extending) common law rights over the land was not sufficient. Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter together with Canon Hardwicke Drummond Rawnsley (1851-1920) also saw a place for the actual ownership and direct control over significant heritage land and buildings. In 1895, they founded the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. The early pioneers of the National Trust pursued their interests outside otherwise already busy lives in other fields (Octavia Hill, for example, was an active social housing reformer of international standing). Aesthetically countryside poets such as

¹⁸ 55 George III Highways Etc. (England) Act (1815). This Act consolidated and developed powers first promulgated in the General Highways Act of 1773, which allowed for orders for diversions and closures of highways to be made by two Justices of the Peace with the consent of local landowners.

Tennyson inspired them and at least two of them were friends of Ruskin¹⁹. They shared Ruskin's fear of uncontrolled development and industrialisation and wished to do something positive to preserve threatened countryside, coastal areas, and historic buildings. The Trust was incorporated by the National Trust Act of 1907 and under this Act was granted unique powers to declare inalienable those properties preserved for the benefit of the nation. The breadth of interest of the Trust, its organisation and legal status marked it out from earlier nineteenth century preservation organisations. It was in concept more in tune with the century to come, and it was indeed greatly strengthened during the first half of the twentieth century by further Acts in 1919, 1937 and 1939.

The Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society and the National Trust were inspired by similar motives as those other nineteenth-century movements concerned with building conservation and the protection of the built environment. They also began to recognise the importance of the protection of wildlife and, for example, by 1910 the Trust owned thirteen properties valued especially for their wildlife (Sheail 2002, 104-105).

Society for the Protection of Birds

The oldest significant organisation dedicated to the protection of wildlife for its own sake is the Society for the Protection of Birds (now the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds [RSPB]). This was formed in 1889 (www.rspb.org.uk/about/history/). It followed a long campaign to protect the great crested grebe, which by 1860 had been almost driven to extinction by the millinery industry. The idea of habitat and wildlife conservation

¹⁹ Ruskin was also a major influence on Morris, the founding father of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings — see above.

became immensely important during the course of the twentieth century. The fact that it was not generally so considered in the nineteenth century may reflect the idea that the management of the natural environment was considered safe in the hands of the professional landowner²⁰. In the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century, it might have been easy to believe that farmed land was more vulnerable to the encroachments of nature than that natural habitats were threatened by agriculture (Sheail 2002, 109-110).

Campaign to Protect Rural England²¹

Throughout the nineteenth century the leadership of conservation and preservation initiatives was predominantly drawn from a cadre of individuals with influence in the political, social, economic and aesthetic elites (Birtles 2003, 221-234). They were informed individuals and frequently leading social philanthropists and reformers as well. Religion was often also of importance to them and many either had an interest in domestic Christian missionary activity or had been influenced by it. Octavia Hill, for example, was an active member of the Christian Socialist movement²². Their interest in the natural and built environment was pursued with the same vigour as their social philanthropy, and they were in a sense also environmental philanthropists. The success of the voluntary societies they founded had influenced how successive governments began to see the role of the State in the protection of the natural as well as the built environment. As a result the opening years of the twentieth century saw a step change in the Government's response to rural issues. The first half of

²⁰ See the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

²¹ Previously the Council for the Preservation of Rural England

²² There are a number of brief biographies of Octavia Hill, see typically www.cambridgeshirehistory.com

the century may be viewed as an extended period of negotiation between key interested parties, including pressure groups championing increased access to, and preservation of, open spaces and the natural environment; local landowners concerned with their rights of ownership; and successive governments concerned primarily with the social and economic health of rural communities and the continuity of food supplies.

The establishment in 1926 of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) focused attention on two major policy areas (<http://www.cpre.org.uk/about/what>). The first of these was the desirability of creating National Parks. A case for them was made to the Government by CPRE and in response an enquiry was initiated (the Addison Report). In 1935 a number of voluntary organisations with an interest in recreation, public amenity and conservation formed the Standing Committee for National Parks (now the Campaign for National Parks) with a view to encouraging the government to act and encourage public support. Following the Scott Report in 1942 (which advocated the creation of national parks) a White Paper, *The Control of Land Use* was published in 1945 which resulted in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. This Act allowed for the establishment of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (Cullingworth & Nadin 1994, 171-173).

The second of CPRE's major policy areas was the attempt to restrict further encroachment of built-up areas into the countryside. This met with some early success when under The Town and Country Planning Act 1932 development in rural areas was, to some degree, included in the general planning regime. It was followed in 1935 by the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act, The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 (which

strengthened the concept of comprehensive land use planning), and in 1955 a further planning Act establishing Green Belts around major conurbations (Cullingworth & Nadin 1994, 3-12).

The CPRE is still a major pressure group opposed to large-scale development in rural areas, and particularly housing development designed for the benefit of urban populations. It is strongly opposed to house-building on green field sites and has encouraged successive post-war governments to promote high density housing schemes on brown field sites or through infilling within existing settlement envelopes. Recently, CPRE have met with some success with this but often with unforeseen results. For example, until very recently gardens were designated as brownfield sites²³. Whilst the development of derelict sites is appropriate, the historical character of rural settlements can very quickly erode where infilling on garden plots becomes endemic.

Agricultural Policy and Government Agencies for the Countryside in the 20th century

Countryside policy has primarily been concerned with economic prosperity and sustainability for rural communities. The establishment of the Rural Development Commission in 1909, set the direction for both government policy and its administrative approach to the countryside for much of the twentieth century. Since then the economic viability of the countryside was considered by government to depend principally on agriculture, and the effect of agricultural policy on the management of the countryside has been, as might be expected, profound.

²³ This is set to change post the 2010 general election, with the announcement by the Coalition Government that this designation will change.

Ensuring food supplies became of paramount importance during the First World War. This set the scene for similar major policy initiatives to resurface and develop during and after the Second World War, which led to the development of an increasingly industrialised agricultural industry post-1945. Blunden and Curry, writing about the state of agricultural policy immediately after the war, suggest that:

Central to all Government policies since the war has been the notion that all agricultural land is sacrosanct. The Scott Report of 1942 provides the source of those much quoted words “every acre counts” (Blunden & Curry 1988, 1).

The basis of the post-war settlement for British farmers was set out in the Agricultural Act 1947, and the emphasis was on promoting and maintaining an efficient farming *industry* capable of producing a desirable proportion of the nation’s food with minimum prices allowing for a proper return for producers (Bowers 1985, 66).

Improved technology enabled the intensification of agricultural output, supported by a favourable government policy framework (Blunden & Turner 1985, 9-31; Sheail 2002, 111-114). The effects of post-war agricultural policy were to increase the area of intensely managed agricultural land and diminish natural habitats for wildlife, a situation that greatly frustrated conservationists (Sheail 2002, 110). As Sheail has pointed out, “for the first time, farmers have the capacity to eliminate species and communities on a regional and national scale” (Sheail 1986, 9). The Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), established in 1969 by “a group of forward thinking farmers who were increasingly concerned about the dramatic loss of habitat and wildlife as a result of the ever increasing intensification of farming methods” was part of a wider response to this situation (www.fwag.org.uk/about-fwag.htm).

The official view of the dependency of the rural economy on agriculture survived until the policy changes brought in by the Thatcher government of the 1980s. Subsequently the economic supremacy of agriculture (although obviously still important) was supplanted by the gospel of rural economic diversity (Blunden & Curry 1988, 1-37), partly made possible by changes to the European Common Agricultural Policy that was substituting payments directly linked to production with ones based on land area. Nature conservation, the creation of urban villages²⁴, leisure pursuits and rural based employment opportunities (but not necessarily in agriculture) have all been encouraged by government policy since then and the appropriate bodies set up to support these initiatives.

Natural England and the Commission for Rural Communities

Legislation following the end of the Second World War was extensive in many areas and the management of the countryside was no exception. This was partly as a result of a catching up process where, pending prior to the outbreak of war, legislation was held back until the end of hostilities; this can be seen with regard to commons (Birtles 2003, 268-275) and especially in the case of National Parks (Sheail 2002, 115-122). Post-war legislation produced a whole raft of official organisations working within conservation and rural management, intended to manage policy areas outside the remit of the existing Rural Development Commission.

The National Parks Commission and the Nature Conservancy Council, were both set up under The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949). The former became the Countryside Commission

²⁴ A recently expressed concept of how small settlements might be established in rural areas where the inhabitants are not dependant on the agricultural industry. There is no standard definition but it is discussed in *Urban Villages* published by the Urban Villages Forum 1992 (revised 1995).

under the Countryside Act of 1968, whilst in 1991 the latter was absorbed into English Nature, a new body set up by the Environment Protection Act of 1990. In 1999 a new umbrella organisation was established, the Countryside Agency (a merger of the Countryside Commission and the Rural Development Commission) with statutory responsibility for promoting the quality of life for people living in the countryside and the quality of the countryside for everyone. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 subsequently merged part of the Countryside Agency with English Nature and parts of the Rural Development Service to form Natural England — an independent statutory organisation “championing integrated resource management, nature conservation, biodiversity, landscape, access and recreation”²⁵. The remaining part of the Countryside Agency became the Commission for Rural Communities²⁶. Confusing as all this is, it does emphasise the growing importance of conservation and countryside issues within the realm of public policy and the government’s attempts to co-ordinate this.

THEME 3 –CONTEMPORARY POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT

During the twentieth century there was a huge increase in the membership of most conservation and preservation organisations and this overt public support has strengthened the political respectability of such

²⁵ www.naturalengland.org.uk/

²⁶ The setting up of The Commission for Rural Communities, with the brief to tackle rural disadvantage demonstrates a continued commitment by central government for rural communities, but mainly in the context of rural as ‘non-urban’.

issues (CM 7057 2007, 4-6) ²⁷. The growing significance of heritage-based tourism for the rural economy has also had an impact (Allnut 2004). However, legislation, the advent of English Heritage, and the related growth of research, guidance and advice, as well as specific tools to aid discernment and decision-making at local level, have been the most significant factors affecting the management of the historical environment within the past twenty years.

The Contemporary Planning Approach

The contemporary approach to planning in the management of the historical environment has emerged since the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Changes to policy on the management of the countryside and rural affairs, as well as modernisation of the planning system, led to modifications in the law to reflect contemporary concerns as to how both the built and natural environment should be managed in the future. There have been attempts to more clearly relate one policy area with another as, for example, in *The Planning System: General Principles* (2005), issued by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, where the statutory effects of non-planning legislation is spelt out²⁸. There is now also a whole raft of Planning Policy Statements (PPS) — the legacy of the previous Labour Administration — relating to a greater or lesser extent to the historic environment.

²⁷ Membership of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds grew from about 10,000 in 1960 to 1,000,000 in 1997. (www.rspb.org.uk/about/history/index.asp); membership of the Ramblers' Association from 10,000 in 1952 to 142,000 in 2005. ([www. Ramblers.org.uk/](http://www.Ramblers.org.uk/)); English Heritage's current membership is 687,000 and National Trust membership is now 3.6 million (DCMS 2010, 17). There are also 850 civic societies and 300 Building Preservation Trusts (DCMS 2007).

²⁸ In May 2006 planning responsibility for local government was transferred to a successor ministry, The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

The principal ones are as follows:

PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development;

PPS 5: Planning for the Historic Environment²⁹

PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas;

PPS 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation;

PPS 11: Regional Spatial Strategies;

PPS 12: Local Development Frameworks; and

PPS 22: Renewable Energy;

Moves to break down and work across departmental boundaries are no doubt to be welcomed, but it still leaves the fundamental divide between an urbanised national planning system and the gospel of rural isolationism intact. For example, Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (Published 3rd August 2005) recognises that “many country towns and villages are of considerable historic and architectural value, or make an important contribution to local countryside character” and advocates making use of “Landscape Character Assessments and Village or Town Design Statements, and the design elements of Village or Parish Plans prepared by the local community” (PPS 7, Para 12). The wording, however, still suggests an urban orientated policy aimed at the historical environment as a built environment. The notion that only *many* and not all or most settlements are of historical value, the continued parity of *architecture* with *history* and the consideration of countryside as in some way separate from the habitation

²⁹ PPS 5 (March 2010) replaces both *PPG 16: Archaeology and Planning 1990* and *PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment*. English heritage have, simultaneously issued a guidance document, *PPS 5: Planning for the Historic Environment: Planning Practice Guide*. In all these documents there is an emphasis on the importance of being able to place ‘value’ and ‘significance’ on historical ‘assets’.

that is part of it, indicate the urbanised mindset³⁰. It is important, however, to bridge this divide if legislation and public bureaucracies are to properly support the historical rural environment as an integrated system comprising both its built and un-built spatial elements.

Heritage Protection Bill 2008

Unfortunately, the once long awaited Heritage Protection Bill 2008 (now in abeyance) whilst streamlining the existing system, did not attempt to relate the planning regime for designated heritage assets (listed buildings, scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens) to wider landscape issues³¹. The proposed reforms concentrated on the work of local authority historical building conservation officers and archaeologists and they have not identified the areas of work carried out by landscape historians regarding the management of the historical environment as specifically relevant (CM 7077 2007, 32; Atkins 2006, Executive Summary).

Neither did the proposed legislation acknowledge the potential link with broader rural policy, currently the responsibility of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This Department's responsibilities include commons, sites of special scientific interest, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty — broadly the

³⁰ It is interesting that a proposal in 1986 to create rural conservation areas was dropped because of lack of support from planners (Cullingworth & Nadin 1994, 176).

³¹ This Bill, since the May 2010 election is now presumably lost. It was originally intended to reach the statute book by 2010, but was temporarily removed from Parliament's legislative agenda in November 2008, although the Labour Government had been consulting on these changes since 2001. The draft Heritage Protection Bill proposed adjustments to the existing system only, although many of its proposals would have been genuine improvements. For example, for the first time under these proposals more emphasis would have been placed on the historic value of Conservation Areas, with archaeological and artistic distinctiveness, in addition to architectural significance as now, being of material consideration (CM 7349 2008; Department for Media, Culture and Sport 2008). However, the Bill failed to address the more fundamental issues concerning the structure of the legislative and regulatory system — especially the separation of functions relating to rural settlements between town and country planning and countryside regimes.

policy arena that is supported by Natural England, or the socio-economic welfare of rural communities cared for by the Commission for Rural Communities³².

Only in the management of protected landscape is there scope for planning policies and countryside policies to merge at the level of service delivery in a meaningful way. For example, a joint publication issued in 2005 by The Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature and the Environment Agency illustrates this: it intended to “help planning authorities and regional planning bodies in preparing plans and strategies under the new planning system” (Tyldesley & Associates 2005, 3). This publication is directed at the strategic level, but serves to highlight the way that different (but related) policy areas have often developed separately, but should be considered holistically. This degree of co-operation seems plausible because, for example, National Parks are either effectively planning authorities in their own right, or have special provision that enables them to combine the needs of their landscape conservation responsibilities with that of a local planning authority (Cullingworth & Nadin 1994, 34). Additionally, although planning responsibility for AONBs locates with the particular local planning authority, AONB’s have a joint advisory body to advise and co-ordinate on planning issues. This arrangement enables the requirement for the protection of the countryside and its special character to be applied consistently by the several planning authorities.

³² It is expected that both these organisations will be reviewed as part of the Coalition Government’s review of quangos.

The European Dimension — the European Landscape Convention

In February 2006, the Government at last signed the European Landscape Convention [ELC] (ELC 20.X.2000, Florence). Under the Convention signatories undertake to recognise in law that landscape is an essential part of people's surroundings: an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity. Signatories are expected to establish and implement policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning. There is an expectation that procedures will be established for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies mention above. The intention is to integrate landscape into regional and town planning policies, as well as cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies. This would include any other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscapes (ELC Article 5 — General Measures). A helpful aspect of the Convention is that it applies to natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas, thus moving some way to overcoming the perception that there is a natural division between the built and un-built elements of the spatial environment in rural areas (ELC Article 4 — Scope). If these intentions were to be implemented, it would greatly strengthen the management of the broader historical environment. There is, however, scant evidence that this is actually happening at present.

Practical Management of the Historical Environment

The practical management of the historic environment within town and country planning rests with local planning authorities and has developed in two directions. The first has come to be known as 'heritage protection' and broadly encompasses the statutory responsibilities that local

planning authorities exercise over such elements as listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, and conservation areas. The second — classified here under the broad heading ‘historical landscape protection’ — has to do with understanding and assessing the historic landscape in order to influence current and future development. This is a non-statutory approach and has been developed by English Heritage since the early 1990s to bring to the attention of planners, developers and others the significance of the historic landscape in general (Fairclough et al 1999). ‘Historical landscape protection’ seeks to influence the planning and development process (often at the strategic level) and does not necessarily engage directly with those in local planning authorities with responsibility for heritage protection (Eydman & Swanson 2005).

Heritage Protection

The principles for heritage protection are now well established. In the foreword of the 2007 White Paper *Heritage Protection for the 21st Century*, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport wrote:

The historic environment matters to all of us. It tells us about who we are and where we have come from. It gives identity to our villages, towns and cities. It has shaped the distinctive character of our countryside.

People recognise and value the importance of the historic environment. It makes where they live and work special. They look after historic assets in their care. They participate through volunteering, study, activities and events. They visit historic buildings and sites in huge numbers.

The heritage protection system is about how we protect and sustain this essential resource, both for us today and for future generations.

We know how important this is. People care passionately about how their historic environment is preserved. They

want a system that provides the right levels of protection. They want to be involved in decisions about the heritage and about how we manage change. (CM 7057 2007, 4)

Within the space of four short paragraphs, the minister endorsed the thinking behind so much of the legislation, government guidance, and the approach advocated by English Heritage to those responsible for the management of the historical environment (English Heritage 2000). This champions a comprehensive, participative and integrated approach to the task of heritage protection (English Heritage 2006a; 2006b; 2008). Even though the 2008 Bill (based on the 2007 White Paper) failed to progress into an Act, the outgoing Labour Government made a restatement of this philosophy in March 2010 (*The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England*, DCMS, 2010). However, it is arguable that the present planning system has so far failed to fully convert the official advice into a workable and sustainable set of practices.

Balancing Theory and Practice

One of the initial difficulties is the matter of terminology. This is of considerable importance when observing how laws, policies and guidance are interpreted, reports are written, and action is implemented at the local level.

Landscape historians understand the term 'landscape' to include the built and non-built parts of the total environment, components that are interpreted as being in a meaningful, symbiotic relationship. The reason for this all-inclusiveness is because landscape historians interpret the term 'landscape' to mean what wilderness becomes as a result of the impact of human culture. As Muir has put it — landscape embodies:

...land which has sustained the human occupants for many generations, and which bears the imprints, some prominent and some masked, of centuries of human exploitation, development and redevelopment. (Muir 1999, 50).

To the landscape historian, 'landscape' includes the built and the un-built environment and embraces the urban as well as the rural. 'Countryside' is regarded as a cultural construct used to describe that which is beyond urban space. It is associated with rural settlement but also embraces the *natural* environment and its ecology. The idea persists, however (despite the corpus of scholarly research, legislation and extensive guidance) that 'landscape' is the same as 'countryside': the area outside anything described as urban — but for the landscape historian, 'countryside' is an aspect of 'landscape' and both contribute to the historical environment. Despite the official government position being that every aspect of the historical environment should be managed holistically, it is difficult to see how this can be done successfully where there is still uncertainty about how to categorise different elements of the historical landscape and countryside is still perceived as something apart.

The present guidance has not materially advanced a broader understanding of landscape when applied to local situations by local planners. Divisions that currently exist in the arrangements for managing change and development within the built elements of settlement and its associated landscape, it is suggested, have not kept up with the holistic approach envisaged in the current Guidance. Somehow, there needs to be a way found to bridge this gap between theory and practice. Because there are no *radical* plans for changes to the law for the foreseeable future, it is unlikely that difficulties over terminology will be mitigated by legislative changes to the planning system. An alternative might be to refresh the way

that local planning authorities implement the existing planning regime through an educative process.

Learning from Scholarly Research

Scholarly investigation into the planning regime is well established and covers an extensive range of topics. Existing research relevant to this study falls into three broad areas. First, that concerned with the workings of the development system in its widest sense (that is, not only concerned with the historical environment); secondly, that into the workings of countryside protection; thirdly, research analysing the work of historic protection within local authorities.

Regarding the first broad area, geographers, in particular (but urban planners and planning specialists, also) have looked at how the system works and how decisions are reached through the interaction of stakeholders such as developers, planning officers, and the community — usually in an urban context (Freeman 1986, 1990; Larkham 1986a & b; Whitehand & Whitehand 1984; Short et al 1986; McGlynn & Samuels 2000). The relevance of this research is the insight afforded to the wider operation of the development regime. The importance for the landscape historian is that it identifies the several stakeholders and perspectives with which it is necessary to work, and the processes and approaches involved. The importance for planners is that it identifies the broader knowledge and skills that would be beneficial for improving the system.

Research into countryside policy and environmental protection tends to form a separate corpus, although there are links with research into planning in rural areas, and countryside and environmental policies for historic settlement also relate to planning and heritage protection (Sheail 2002). Particularly important has been the research into land utilisation,

mentioned in earlier chapters (Stamp 1942; 1950), research which has initiated further interest in land use but has also influenced planning and economic development more widely. Recent research into land use has attempted to combine a number of facets including geology, natural habitats, environmental and cultural factors (Countryside Agency 2006).

The third area of research focused directly on the current performance of the heritage protection regime. As part of the preparatory research commissioned by the government for the heritage protection review, there have been a number of important research projects and surveys into the delivery and organisation of historic environment protection within the relevant local government services (Chitty & Baker 2002; ALGEO 2003a & b; Grover et al 2003; Atkins 2006). The proposed changes to current working practices were based on the results of this research. However, the research only looked at archaeological and building conservation skills and did not take into consideration the full range of skills needed to implement English Heritage's advice for the sector, including the key skills needed for the analysis of settlement morphology and the history of the landscape. Therefore, the gap between the ways that formal advice of official agencies on how the historic environment *ought* to be managed, and the way that front line services are *actually* delivered, continues to exist.

Local authorities tend to respond most positively to the requirements of the needs of services placed upon them by the legislative framework within which they operate, and particularly to statutory duties and responsibilities (Sawer 2008, 40-42; O'Reilly 2008, 43-44). In the main, therefore, local planning authorities commit resources to meet the skills and knowledge base needed to fulfil main service delivery needs, rather than match them to the technical advice offered by bodies such as English

Heritage (although this is not to suggest that this cannot, or does not happen).

Local planning authorities have become adept at framing policy plans to meet central government requirements, which generally expect that an holistic approach is adopted. However, the actual performance of the day-to-day management of local development is in practice tied to the process of planning applications (a reactionary process). This means that the officers with responsibility for development control and the preservation of the historical environment are constrained to individual development projects (with local building schemes being necessarily numerically the greater). Under these circumstances it is not surprising that skills and knowledge associated with planning advice and building conservation continued to be favoured. Similarly, where archaeological assessment under PPS 5 (previously Planning Policy Guidance 16) relates particularly to development control requirements, this places a premium on site related skills such as planning advice and activities related to development control (Atkins 2006).

Many conservation officers have developed skills that relate to a broader knowledge of landscape. However, as current research into their work shows, more attention is paid in practice to the architectural and visual aspects of the built environment: conservation officers are trained in architectural conservation, not landscape history³³. This is a particular issue as the subtlety of local character and distinctiveness depends on historical

³³ Presently, the recognised qualification for local authority conservation officers is membership of the Institute of Historic Buildings Conservation (IHBC website: www.ihbc.org.uk/). However, despite the Institute's stated interest in the 'historic environment', their primary interest — as well as the emphasis of their qualifications — remains in architectural conservation (Eydmann & Swanson 2005).

landscape perspectives, not just architectural characteristics (English Heritage 2006a; 4.6-4.14).

Historical landscape protection — Devising Tools to Help

The legal protection of historic landscapes, where this has happened at all in the past, depended upon its association with features such as listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, or its inclusion in National Parks or areas of outstanding natural beauty. Whilst the preservation of countryside has been of great concern throughout most of the twentieth century, this has largely been in terms of its protection from unregulated development such as suburbanisation. The control of ribbon development and the creation of green belts, for example, offered legal protection to the countryside in general but were not related specifically to its historical value. However, the post-war road-building programme, in particular, started to raise concerns from amongst environmentalists, archaeologists and landscape historians because of the rapid and often intrusive threat that their construction caused to both the natural and historic landscape (Sheail 2002, 189-190). In 1990, as a result of the growing concern that something needed to be done to protect landscape in general from the development pressures of modern life, the Conservative Government issued the White Paper *This Common Inheritance: Britain's Environmental Strategy* (CM 1200 1990).

This document was a landmark one because, for the first time, the desirability of a coherent strategy based on input from all government departments was proposed — one which would take account of the full range of issues to do with the environment (Kearns 1991, 363). The scope of this White paper was extensive and included climate change, the economic relationship between the northern and southern hemispheres, sustainable

and economic development and much more. An important domestic element was intergenerational equity, “the possibility of passing to our kith and kin an environment which would support a lifestyle similar to our own” (Kearns 1991, 366). Implicit in this was the possibility of landscape protection — in the words of the White Paper:

We must put a proper value on the natural world: it would be odd to cherish a Constable but not the landscape he depicted. The foundation stone of all the policies in this White Paper is our responsibility to future generations to preserve and enhance the environment of our planet. (CM 1200, 10)

Following this White Paper, English Heritage and the Countryside Commission were tasked with exploring the possibility of identifying landscapes of especial historic interest that might form the basis of a register of landscapes of historic significance (Fairclough et al 1999, 1). In 1991 English Heritage issued a policy statement that offered the idea that all landscape is historic to some degree, and an understanding of landscape should encompass habitats and semi-natural features as well as historical and archaeological elements (Fairclough 1991). The government’s acceptance of this approach was indicated by the advice that it gave in Planning Policy Guidance Note: 15 (DoE & DNH 1994).

Subsequent to the 1991 policy statement, the Historic Landscape Project was launched, which ran from 1992 to 1994 (Fairclough et al 1999, viii). This project was located in the archaeological division of English Heritage and became part of the *Exploring our Past* initiative, a wide-ranging review and (eventual) programme into archaeological research expenditure in support of PPG 16, issued in 1991 (Williams 2003). During the course of this research programme English Heritage, building on the philosophy mooted in its 1991 policy statement, decided not to launch a list

of historically significant landscapes (Fairclough et al 1999, 1). Sensibly, Fairclough and his team realised that apart from the difficulties of identifying satisfactory criteria for listing, the effect on landscape not listed would be to give the impression that it had no historical value and possibly make it vulnerable to unsuitable development. This was a good decision, but raised the issue of how an alternative landscape protection regime might be designed. A set of criteria was determined based on the belief that understanding and assessing all landscape is essential for informing and influencing current and future development. The objective was to attempt to establish a process to inform the acceptability of change rather than conserve against it (Fairclough et al 1999, 8). From the outset, the intention was to create a method to identify the historical character of the whole landscape for a number of uses including “developing awareness of local identity, academic understanding, designations and planning policy, development appraisals” (Fairclough et al 1999, 56). In the early 1990s the practical outcome of this early deliberation was the Historic Landscape Characterisation project (HLC), a tool specifically designed to inform the planning and development process.

This initiative by English Heritage mirrored the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) project, which originated in the early 1990s with the Countryside Agency [Swanwick 2002]. LCA is a digitalised survey informing scenic and ecological perspectives closely linked to the planning and development process. LCA and HLC have been carried out with a certain degree of synchronisation; most notably in the 1998 joint Countryside Commission, English Heritage, English Nature project that produced the *Countryside Character map* (Clark et al 2004, 1).

The basic concepts underlying the methodology for landscape characterisation were sound, but for a number of reasons the usefulness of the project has become contested. This is partly because of the level of analysis chosen. Fairclough thought that the method should enable the identification of historic landscape character at a broad level “without being carried into too much local detail until the overall picture is clearer” (Fairclough et al 1999, vii). Consequently, Fairclough chose the administrative county as a suitable midway scale between the local and the regional (Fairclough 2001, 25). However, the choice was not a happy one, as planners require *local* detail in order to determine planning applications and HLC cannot deliver this. Furthermore, because HLC is situated within English Heritage’s archaeology division it has become very much an archaeologists’ project. County archaeologists tend to exercise a curatorial role over it, with the HLC analysis being deposited alongside the heritage environment register — an arrangement that in the early days was seen as a strength (Fairclough 2001, 25). However, an unforeseen result has been that key non-archaeologists, such as planners and conservation officers do not have ownership of a tool designed for use by them, and generally they do not have day-to-day access to HLC as a resource (Atkins 2006 and Eydmann and Swanson 2005 provide indirect evidence for this).

Historic Landscape Characterisation, as English Heritage originally conceived it, more easily relates to *rural landscape* than to landscape in general. Indeed, early examples tended to leave built-up areas as red areas on the map, although in places some effort has been made to augment these with urban character assessments (Clark et al 2004).

There are two methodological issues with Historic Landscape Characterisation that need to be considered in relation to its usefulness for

providing reliable historical analysis of the landscape. The first of these has to do with the way that the relationship of settlement and landscape is understood, the second with the format of its content and presentation.

In the first instant, the language used to define landscape and settlement within the HLC process is one with which many archaeologists would feel comfortable. For example, *Yesterday's World, Tomorrow's Landscape* states that:

It is essential that as wide an audience as possible is helped to an understanding that the landscape is a social and cultural construction, an *artefact*, and it therefore requires constant maintenance just as any other human *artefact* does' [italics mine] (Fairclough et al 1999, vii).

Generally, the distinction is drawn between 'countryside', which includes "habitats, semi-natural features, hedges, fields, archaeological sites and buildings" (Fairclough et al 1999, 2) on the one hand and 'settlement', which includes groups of "buildings, patterns of roads, open spaces within and around settlements and views from within settlements" on the other (PPG 15, quoted in Fairclough et al 1999, 2). This suggests that settlement might be thought of as something separate from countryside, almost an 'object' in the landscape; a point of view that continues to be central to HLC analysis (Clark et al 2004, 5-10). Settlement itself, however, is not defined further and there is no engagement with settlement morphology. The idea that rural settlement is intimately part of a culturally conditioned socio-economic system — the product of both its habitation elements (houses, their associated buildings, with their curtilages), and those elements within its associated landscape (fields, hedges, track ways, managed habitats) is not explored. The assumption contained within the philosophy behind HLC

seems very closely allied to the concept of ‘countryside’ rather than ‘landscape’.

This raises some important issues about how settlement is perceived. For example, to the urban morphologist an historic country town is complex with many different types of land use besides the habitative; some are associated with industry, others with specialised usages including horticulture, sometimes involving quite large areas of open land (Slater 1986; Ayers 2003; and to a certain extent Lilley 2000). It is doubtful, however, whether many people would feel comfortable with treating the non-habitation elements — specifically the employment areas — of a town as not being part of the settlement. Yet, this is regularly accepted when discussing rural settlement, where fields (the economic power house and employment area) are considered to be countryside and *beyond* the settlement. Furthermore, in the context of towns Conzen has established the significance of ‘fringe-belts’ in the process of morphogenesis; that is, the creation of mixed and new land use patterns beyond the core built environment, which frequently included agricultural land (Conzen 1969, 125). This suggests that even towns might extend into the peripheral landscape, areas which are clearly identified as part of the settlement. Therefore, of itself, elements of the countryside are also potentially elements of settlement as well. As Astill has pointed out, “the small (medieval) town was entirely a function of the rural economy” (Astill 1985, 51). The issue of how we define settlement therefore is of paramount importance for an analysis of historical landscape. In relation to English Heritage’s landscape characterisation initiative the point being made is that Fairclough’s ideas of landscape as ‘artefact’ — influenced by, but outside settlement — will support a different form of methodology from a view that sees settlement as

intrinsically inclusive of the built form *and* its associated landscape elements.

Secondly, a further cause for confusion is that Historic Landscape Characterisation does not have a unified structure in each of the county areas surveyed. The basic requirement is that the historical origins of present day land use is recorded on a digitally based geographical information systems (GIS). This involves presenting mapped data in a two-dimensional format that is intended to allow the user to simply read off the historic nature of the landscape. The quality of the system varies considerably, and therefore its usefulness as a technique is sometimes difficult to evaluate. Where the work has been done thoroughly by reputable landscape historians, historic geographers, or landscape archaeologists producing time-depth studies, HLC is reliable and informative (for example in Devon and Cornwall by Turner and Herring respectively). Regrettably this standard is not always achieved and the result can be superficial and confusing (for example in Kent, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire the original surveys' material is under revision as the first surveys have proved unsatisfactory). A related issue is whether the complexity of the historic environment, as it is in reality, is reflected accurately in the GIS format alone, without the addition of a considerable amount of further information. Arguably, the 'scientific' presentation that GIS allows does not ensure the quality of information for the end user and that outcomes may be oversimplified to suit the medium; there is a real concern that the methodology itself should not take over the system (Williamson, 2007).

However, regardless as to how well the work is executed the difficulty lies in the way the outputs are eventually presented to the non-historic expert when it comes to real decision making, and there is evidence that this

not always adequate (Austin 2007). The system is not necessarily reliable as a decision-making tool for use by non-experts without high-level technical supervision, which is not necessarily available when the data is released. Finally, HLC also provides a limited perspective of the historic landscape because it only presents it in plan view and does not offer a ground level viewpoint. For the investigator interested in understanding the historic landscape as *place*, this is a serious imbalance of perception.

Roberts and Wrathmell's Approach to Regional Analysis

A top down approach is strongly related to Regionalism (Rippon, 2004, 2007). Regional perspectives remain an important research tool and help in understanding the complexity of landscape history in the national context — but they have their limitations and remain a vehicle for delivering generality. The danger in reliance on regional perspectives is that they are poor at informing place specific decision-making. Another methodological difficulty of regionalism is that regions tend (inevitably) to suggest boundaries, which are really very difficult to verify statistically and identify on the ground. As long as it is understood that these drawn boundaries are intended to be merely indicative of where regional identities meet on the map there is no insuperable problem. As Wooldridge so eloquently expressed the issue:

Where the geographer delimits areas which he boldly, perhaps rashly, calls 'natural regions', he cannot lose sight of the fact that they would cease to be in any way natural if they were divorced from their surroundings. His boundaries are necessarily conventional and must own to a high degree of unreality; there can be no question of "cutting along the dotted line". (Wooldridge & Goldring 1966, 2)

However, with the increased use of digital mapping systems, and the ability it gives to look more closely at sections of a regional map, it is

tempting to treat the imaginary boundary as a real object on the ground — at which point the long, top-down view of the regional perspective becomes confused with the genuinely local perspective gained through detailed local study.

One regional perspective in particular stands out at the present time, the study into settlement dispersal distributions by Roberts and Wrathmell; this, as with HLC, has been heavily invested in by English Heritage and is considered to be a supporting project (Fairclough 2001, 23-24). The extensive research by Roberts & Wrathmell into the distribution of mid-nineteenth century rural settlement dispersion is very interesting: although it is limited by not attempting the larger issue of relating settlement distribution to morphology. The product of the research is a digital data set marshalled through GIS, but largely available only in printed form. The idea of recording distribution patterns is an attractive one and if the raw data for the whole country were to be made available digitally it would be extremely useful. However, the final product, *The Atlas of Rural Settlement in England* (2000) and the follow up publication *Region and Place* (2002) — a study exploring settlement distribution with other types of landscape elements, archaeological sites and building styles — presents the information in a printed format. Furthermore, the authors have superimposed the data with a regional interpretation that mediates the way that others might use the data. More seriously, it suggests that there are clearly defined and established boundaries between the provinces, sub-provinces and local regions that they postulate (Roberts & Wrathmell 2002, figure 1.4, 10). The constant repetition of these boundaries, not only on maps generated by their own research but also laid across that of others, can give the impression that in some way these boundaries are real (for example, in

Region and Place, figures 1.5; 1.9 — 1.12). This illusion is reinforced by the work of those who have adopted these provinces and their subdivisions at a regional or sub-regional level (Martin and Satchel 2008, 3). The problem is that these boundaries do not actually exist and cannot be identified outside the interpretation of the researchers' own data. When such defined regions are used as a framework for further analysis, and especially when others try to fit their data to the proposed regional boundaries, the danger is that the data becomes skewed (or massaged) to fit them — however unintentionally³⁴. In the context of this study, Roberts and Wrathmell's approach did not help the research into the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley settlements in any positive way. It was found that the claims of the *Region and Place* research to be able to predict types of settlement distribution beyond a broad regional perspective failed in practice.

The significance of both the HLC and *Region and Place* methodologies at the present time is because, as Austin (2007, p. 93) has pointed out, the debate has gone beyond the discourse of academic discipline. It is now entrenched in the decision-making processes of the world of planning, and thereby influences more strongly than ever before real development outcomes. The impact of these approaches and techniques upon the interface between historic analysis and the planning system is of major importance to landscape historians and will need further debate and discussion (see also Chapter 13).

³⁴ Another recent example where Roberts & Wrathmell's density of settlement dispersion boundaries has been followed is found in English Heritage's new series, *England's Landscapes* (Cossons (ed) 2006).

CONCLUSIONS

The conservation of the historic built environment and the preservation of the countryside have continued to develop and influence government policy, but in rather different ways. Conservation of the built environment, normally part of the formal town and country planning system, remains principally the responsibility of local government, whilst the preservation of open spaces and the natural environment are the responsibility of national bodies, either closely related to or part of, central government.

The management of change in the historic environment is very much at the heart of a political and administrative agenda. Whilst the government determines both the statutory and regulatory framework within which the management of the historical environment operates, its enthusiasm for this is largely in proportion to the public appetite for preservation and conservation generally. Currently, the government requires decision-makers to justify how they manage the historic environment, and this necessitates placing 'value' on it in terms that make sense to other players in the market economy as well as the public at large. Whilst this is important, it does not necessarily improve the management of historic rural settlement within its landscape context and, with so many different interests to please and persuade it is often difficult to establish common ground. Agreement tends not to be based on technical analysis, but on subjective criteria that typically includes visual quality (that is, pleasant views or attractive buildings), valued historic buildings and well-maintained streets — what, in short, everyone can agree is *nice* and worth preserving. This does not mean that these concerns are not important. These (and other) elements of a settlement's

morphology impact on people's perception of *place* and reflect the experience of the community.

It is argued that better decisions are made where technical analysis of the historical environment forms the basis for decision-making and stakeholders are empowered to engage with these arguments. For this to happen the already strong community support for the preservation of the historical environment (both in terms of settlement and its associated landscape) would need to be underpinned by a more coherent philosophy, based on knowledge of the historical landscape in its broadest sense. This presents a challenge to landscape historians, and other professionals, interested in informing the processes that impact on historical settlements and their landscapes, but is supported by the approach adopted in PPS 5 regarding the establishment of the 'significance' of historical assets — which is discussed further in Chapter 13.

It is suggested that the historical environment would benefit where planners and developers have a better understanding of what historical settlements are about, where there is more integrated government policy *and* the apparatus for delivering it. This approach would emphasise a balance between the component elements of the historical environment, the recognition of a sense of place, the importance of the historic relationship between settlement and its landscape, and the necessity for dynamic and imaginative planning in future development. Such development will be realised as an exciting challenge, rather than a necessary evil.

Policies for the management of the historical environment need to be robust in regard to future development (a strategic issue), with conservation technique being recognised as one element of a broader tactical armoury. A more integrated approach to the management of the historical environment

would enable the development necessary to sustain economic health, whilst at the same time protecting the fragile historical fabric. This means reappraising the buildings-led approach to conservation and other academic/technical approaches that do not easily accommodate the individuality of specific places. What is actually needed, it is argued, is an approach that is specifically focused on local settlement morphology.

Part Two:
FORMULATING A METHODOLOGY for RESEARCH

CHAPTER 4: THE HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF RURAL SETTLEMENT: THEORY AND PRACTICE

“But like one walking alone and in the dark, I resolved to proceed so slowly and with such circumspection, that if I did not advance far, I would at least guard against falling. I did not even chose to dismiss summarily any of the opinions that had crept into my belief without having been introduced by reason, but first of all took sufficient time carefully to satisfy myself of the general nature of the task I was setting myself, and ascertain the true method by which to arrive at the knowledge of whatever lay within the compass of my powers.”¹

¹ René Descartes, (1637) *Discourse on the Method and the Meditation*.

INTRODUCTION

Poor planning in the context of the historical environment often results in damage or destruction that can be difficult and expensive to rectify, and the opportunity to do so may take many years to emerge. For this reason it is essential that development in historically sensitive areas is carefully thought through and the best decisions made. Understanding the historical environment, obtaining the best information and up-to-date knowledge is an important part of this process. Achieving this will depend on having an effective methodology and form of presentation.

Planners and developers work within a complicated framework of legislative regulation and technical challenges and they are adept at understanding and managing sophistication and working with a wide range of professional expertise. For this reason it is suggested that an historic analysis does not need to have its content over simplified and that it should convey the full complexity of any particular situation. It is accepted, therefore, that the methodology will produce outputs that are at times highly technical, although in a narrative form.

This chapter is concerned with developing an holistic approach to a locally orientated historical analysis of rural settlement. A comprehensive methodology is proposed, based on techniques developed by landscape historians and urban morphologists. It is designed to support the practical implementation of national guidelines so as to aid the work of the managers of the historical environment, local planners, developers, and local communities.

There are a number of important aspects that inform the nature of the methodology. They include: a flexible approach; the use of source material;

the value obtained from prior settlement studies; and the experience of *place*. Prime among these aspects is the understanding afforded by the notion of ‘morphology’ as formulated by M R Conzen and his followers. Conzen’s ideas on morphology underpin the critical analytical tool that is used in this study.

KEY ASPECTS OF THE METHODOLOGY

A Flexible Approach

A comprehensive, but flexible framework is considered preferable to a uniform template. The process is then more responsive to the examination of individual study areas, whilst ensuring the investigation of different areas, seen in comparison, retains a degree of compatibility. The strength of any methodology is its adaptability and its capacity to follow the evidence; hence no two studies will be structured in exactly the same way, although they will share common objectives in terms of trying to understand the complexity of local settlement morphology. Therefore the methodology proposed in this work does not favour the construction of a rigid template: because the evidence will vary between places, the analytical tools required may also be different. This is reflected in the case studies, where there is some variation in topics covered and sources used, reflecting the evidential base for each area.

Use of Sources and Field Observations

The identification and use of sources is critical, and sources can be very varied. However, of equal importance is the way these sources are used to supplement field observation. To some degree, for example, Conzen appeared mainly (but not exclusively) concerned with the plan view, but this is largely because many spatial relationships that can be understood

through experiencing the settlement's morphology on the ground are difficult to illustrate on paper without using the plan view. The map and plan view is useful for such a purpose, but as Jay Appleton nicely puts it (recalling the advice given to him by M R G Conzen, himself):

Maps were important, but a map is to the landscape what a musical score is to a live performance, a secondary record of a primary source (Appleton 2000, 95).

Of first importance, from the perspective of this study, therefore, is the need on the part of the investigator to take in the view for him or herself — experiencing the settlement on the ground is an essential responsibility.

Settlement Studies

This research recognises the significant (and often inspirational) contribution of earlier settlement studies, notably those of Hoskins and Taylor. Studies into the origins and development of medieval settlement, in particular, have been essential in advancing and mastering the techniques that underpin the competent practice of historical landscape analysis (for example, Lewes, Mitchell-Fox and Dyer 1997; Williamson 2003; Jones and Page 2006). The methodology developed in this chapter, and the actual investigation into the settlements of the Ouse Valley and High Weald, draws upon the resources of a wide range of such works. Their influence will be obvious when reading the account of the fieldwork.

Morphology — The Critical Analytical Tool

The work of the urban morphologists (Conzen 1960; Slater 1984; Whitehand 2001; Kropf 1996) shows that a key element in understanding settlement development is accounting for change over time (Dyer 2008, 3). The contribution of urban morphologists to this study is the three-fold analysis derived from the Conzenian tradition — settlement 'form',

‘resolution’ (or the scale of analysis), and ‘time’ — the identification of successive phases of settlement history. Recognising different developmental phases determines the range of significant historical periods (potentially different for every settlement), reveals the historical continuity between the successive phases, and produces an intelligible and comprehensive ‘morphology’ for that particular settlement in its setting.

Although urban morphologists relate their analysis specifically to urban environments, the analysis can also be applied to rural situations. In many cases no modification to the methodology is required since it is clear from the work of Conzen himself (Conzen 1960) and from other historical geographers analysing historic towns (Slater 1986; Lilley 2000) that the analysis is already being applied to the built environments of rural settlement as defined in Chapter One². The same approach may be modified to allow the systematic study of settlement features other than just the habitation elements of the settlement. This approach has informed the methodology adopted in this study, and discussion of aspects of form, resolution and time are contained in the following paragraphs.

Settlement Form

An examination of settlement form has three aspects: determining settlement patterns; settlement distribution; an analysis of the built and non-built elements and the relationship between them. These are described in the following paragraphs.

² It may be worth commenting here that the term ‘urban’ in this context is frequently used to mean the built environment in general, and is not just reserved for the analysis of the morphology of *cities*. This is different from the situation in Chapter Two, where *urban* was being used to define a socio-economic relationship.

Settlement Patterns

The general approach to the fieldwork ought to be robust enough to cope with all types of rural settlement morphology. Typically this includes settlement patterns traditionally identified as being either nucleated or dispersed (see discussion in Chapter Five). However, the notion of whether a particular settlement pattern is either nucleated or dispersed should not be anticipated prior to the analysis, lest it leads to significant local variation being overlooked or suggests that legitimate variation is in some way exceptional. However, the concept of dispersed and nucleated settlement is still a useful one in as much as it exemplifies the idea of variety in settlement morphology and the social and economic history that underlies it.

Settlement Distribution

A significant element of any field study will be the identification of local topography, geology, soil types, and climate. These factors aid understanding about settlement distribution and may influence degrees of dispersal. Drainage and water supply (and by implication rainfall) are especially important for understanding settlement patterns and morphology for the very obvious reason that access to water is a basic essential for settlement to succeed.

Relationship between Built and Non-built Elements

An essential element of Conzen's approach to plan form analysis was his insistence that it should convey the complexity of a settlement's morphology (Conzen 1960, 4). Although his emphasis was on the built form (for example, the analysis of streets and street-systems; plots and street blocks; and buildings and their block plans) he also promoted the place of land-use and the spatial relationships between the built and open elements of the settlement (Conzen 1960, 4 & 5). A key aspect that helps to explain

settlement form, therefore, is the relationship between the built elements and their spatial context: for example, the relationship of habitation to their fields and other physical resources, boundaries, road networks, buildings, and artificial landscape features. The identification of the economic, social, organisational, and technological factors underlying the physical settlement evidence are often essential in understanding that evidence.

Resolution - Determining the Scale of Analysis

Development occurs in a spatial context, and an appropriate level of analysis should be identified, suitable to the scale of the developmental process. The correct level will be the one where an affirmative answer can be given to the key question: *can a specific development scheme succeed on the information supplied?* The basic geographical unit should also, ideally, be capable of forming the building blocks for the study of more extensive geographical areas suitable for strategic planning: requiring an affirmative answer for a second key question: *can strategic development issues be realised using the data supplied?* As previously discussed, typological or regionally based studies tend to be poor at the local detail but good at the more strategic levels: whilst their data collection methods are designed to pick up common relationships, they also tend to eliminate untypical information that is often crucial at the local level of decision-making. Therefore, studies based on specific locations are usually better able to cope with local development decisions, which need a high degree of detailed accuracy about the settlement morphology of that location.

Scale of Analysis used in this Study — the modern civil parish

The most useful unit for the purpose of this study is the parish. The advantage of using parishes is that the concept is of sufficient antiquity to allow for continuity over time (mostly originating at the same time as the

modern settlement pattern was emerging), and usually have clearly defined and well documented boundaries. However, the historiography of the parish is complex, requiring an understanding of its origins; knowledge of its component elements (for example, ‘township’ or ‘vill’, ‘quarters’ and ‘tithings’); and an appreciation of its development over time. The emergence of the modern civil parish from the medieval ecclesiastical parish is complex, and is briefly explored in the following paragraphs. A more detailed examination appears as Appendix B.

The modern civil parish grew out of the secular administrative responsibilities given to local communities within existing ecclesiastical parishes from the sixteenth century. This process culminated in the Local Government Act of 1894³, which established the civil parish as it has come down to us. It remains the administrative unit for contemporary rural communities. Despite changes to the geographical area over which particular parishes extend and the alignment of many parish boundaries the territorial congruence between both civil and ecclesiastical parishes has remained remarkably stable — making the local parish an historically useful unit for analysing local communities over time.

Linked to the idea of the parish, as a local area of administration, is that of the vill or township. Now rather archaic, the township was an important unit of local administration at the time that much of the present day settlement pattern in the southern part of the country, at least, was evolving and the term has a special place in any discussion about historical settlement morphology.

³ 56 & 57 Vict. c. 73

The parish as a unit for study is not without its difficulties. First, its size is very variable even within the same sub-region, so that (for example) parishes within the Ouse Valley can vary from about two thousand acres upwards to about seven thousand acres. Parishes can also be much larger and more complex in different parts of the country. Modern civil parishes tend to be fairly compact, but in the past there have been many cases of settlements territorially surrounded in one parish forming an 'outlier' belonging to another. Occasionally parishes extended over county boundaries, or had outliers in the different county (for a more detailed overview of the variety of parochial arrangements, see Winchester 1990). These are not insuperable problems and, for example, the bigger parishes with chapelries in Huntingdonshire did not prove difficult to fit into the parochial analysis adopted. However, it is recognised that some adjustments might need to be made to the methodology in different areas of the country.

The advantages of the parish as a unit of analysis greatly outweigh any disadvantages. Parishes typically demarcate the limits of much local socio-economic activity of the type associated with historic settlement morphology, although the relationship may be complex and indirect. For example, although the parish is (or was) not a totally self-contained unit, it was historically more than simply an administrative unit. However, a number of parishes can be built up into sub-regional groupings where both the differences and similarities can be appreciated. The detailed results of the fieldwork in both study areas in this study depends on the parish as the basic unit of analysis, and sub-regional groupings have been constructed using them as building blocks.

The Regional Dimension

Although the method used for the practical research is essentially focused on the local rather than the regional, the settlements looked at in both the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley and the eastern High Weald are grounded in their sub-regions. The social, economic, political, and cultural factors that associate settlements with their neighbours, and to some degree define them, are important. Those regional studies, therefore, that explore these relationships have been extremely useful in helping to understand the similarities, and differences, within and between the study areas (Rackham 1986; Thirsk 1987; Everitt 1977; Pythian-Adams 1993). Additionally, topographical and geological regions are important for understanding settlement patterns⁴.

Relationships in Time — Morphogenesis

The study of a settlement's morphology begins at the earliest historical period from which there is settlement evidence (this may be different to documentary evidence for the date of a settlement's origins). By analysing the pattern of development over time, it is possible to establish a temporal relationship between periods of expansions or contraction in settlement morphology. Episodes of clearly defined activity are known as 'morphogenic periods'. Studying the time between morphogenic periods is also significant because it helps to explain the degree and nature of continuity of settlement form. For example, part of the street pattern of Godmanchester is a relic of a Roman period of settlement, subsequently a medieval ecclesiastical and manorial configuration was established that largely over-wrote the Roman; later, the medieval was modified by Parliamentary Inclosure. In between times, there was a cycle of continuity

⁴ The British Geological Survey and Natural England are principal sources for this information

and change within the broad framework of the principal morphogenic periods (see Chapter 7).

The recording of changes to overall settlement morphology over time is clearly important, whether this has resulted as an increase to settlement size, demonstrates stability, or records a diminution in the settlement's morphological structure. Change may vary across the settlement's morphology, affecting some but not all of the morphological elements; this can lead to the initiation of new elements or the extinguishing of older ones. Sometimes irregularities in the morphological tissue may be an important local issue; for example, the identification of residual elements (relicts of older morphologies), or the identification of core elements that seems resistant to change over time — even though the reason for their origins is no longer directly relevant to contemporary morphology. As Conzen has postulated, once a settlement's morphological periods have been identified, it is possible to isolate the elements from different stages in the settlement's morphology in the present day landscape. Core elements within the settlement envelope that have proved resistant to change over time are important because they often contribute to an enduring sense of place.

In Chapter Two, the point was made that the nature, rate, and effects of change can depend upon the degree of technological competence available to contemporary societies in past ages. This and a community's ability to effectively and efficiently acquire and use resources are related topics that are important to understanding the progress of morphogenesis. This may be a significant theme in understanding a settlement, especially in relation to the effects of modern development.

Determining the Experience of 'Place'

A sense of place implies that 'place' is something experienced; not only examined and analysed in an evidential way. There is, it is suggested, an overriding imperative in studies of settlement to recognise the importance of peoples' perceptions about locality, now and in the past. Such perceptions may be difficult to capture but it must remain an important objective to try. The way that community perceptions emerge is also of interest, but the process is obscure. It may be an iterative one that involves the melding of a number of strands including views learnt from experts — in which case there is an implicit relationship between the community perspective and the input from external sources (this is explored further in Chapter 13).

Various techniques for attempting to capture the enduring experience of place include the telling of stories, folklore, and perception mediated through literature and art; what they all have in common is the willingness by the investigator to listen and observe. Success depends on the trained observer (for example, the landscape historian) accurately recording and analysing. Eventually, these perceptions can be offered back to the local community for its members to judge to what extent they themselves consider that the analysis reflects their own experience.

How local communities experience and understand 'place' may be complex and involve differing perspectives; but it is proposed that taking account of the community's enduring sense of place should be accepted as part of the process of making new development decisions. In practice, consultation with the community on the findings of the professional analysis may be part of a penultimate exercise prior to deciding what should be agreed as material consideration for planning purposes.

COMPOSITION OF THE CASE STUDY NARRATIVES

The primary objective of the research into individual study areas is to produce an ‘interpretative, illustrated narrative’ that aids managers of the historical environment, planners and other stakeholders to determine and understand settlement form and the various elements that go to make it what it is. How the narrative is formulated, and the approach to a landscape history analysis adopted for this purpose, are set out in the rest of this section.

A Three-Stage Investigation

Investigation for a study area is conducted in three stages. During the first stage a full picture of the nature and history of the target settlement area is obtained, through initial desk research based on available sources. The scale of analysis is determined (ideally at parish level with an additional regional dimension). The second stage is the conduct of accurate field observation, which includes local knowledge and perception where this is possible. This reflects an appreciation of how a ‘sense of place’ is experienced. Finally, these two stages are reconciled, at the third stage, into a detailed description of the settlement’s morphology. These three stages form a framework that ensures all significant aspects are covered without compromising legitimate differences. The organisation of the framework for the case studies has four broad categories: the topographical description, identification of the morphological elements, the socio-economic context, and the identification of principal research themes. These are arranged below largely in the sequence with which they are engaged during the course of the research - although the categories themselves become merged in the final text.

Organisational Framework

Introduction to the Study Area

Each study area is subject to an audit of their topographical, physiological, and geological features, both from desk research material — literature, maps etc — and from ground-view perambulations of the territory. Each area is related in a general way to the topography of the region or sub-region of which it is part. This is also the place for an overview of any special historical or contemporary issues that help to set the scene for the rest of the narrative for each area⁵.

Identification of Morphological Elements

Morphological elements are the tangible and observable elements in the landscape, especially those that define the character of a settlement. The most noted elements within a settlement are generally the buildings⁶. Buildings in which humans live and work are grouped into a broad category, referred to as 'habitation'. This would include buildings for housing as well as those closely related to human activity such as farm buildings, industrial and commercial premises. Generally speaking this would also encompass spaces within domestic curtilages and in some cases adjacent enclosures, if the activities for which they were created were intimately related to human habitation.

Not all buildings fall within the ambit of habitation; for example, barns or byres set aside in fields may well not. The parish church, even

⁵ For example, in the Huntingdonshire study the impact of St. Neots, a particularly urbanised settlement, was thought to be of sufficient importance to be mentioned at the preliminary stage.

⁶ In this study, a building includes any structure within the meaning expressed in s. 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In effect this includes anything erected (even a boundary stone), provided it is in some way fixed to the ground, together with the ground around it (usually called a curtilage) provided that it serves a purpose in relation to the building in some necessary or useful way (Pickard 1996, 1-11).

where it is located within centres of habitation is clearly different, as are other major structures such as castles, which also have multi-functions. Ritual or high status buildings like churches and castles are considered as 'landmark buildings', but this nomenclature may also include other structures that are prominent, if not always large, and which may have economic or social significance; for example, mills and public houses. Landmark buildings are important because of the contribution they make to the way that people differentiate between settlements, or identify with them.

Mention has been made to spaces in relation to habitation, but rural settlements normally have large areas of associated space outside their habitation areas. Related field systems, managed woodlands, for example, are all part of the settlement. Frequently, some of these spatial assets are of particular significance within the context of the settlement: elements like greens may be considered landmark spaces. Elements that mark off spaces, for example, field and woodland boundaries often survive for long periods, even after dramatic land use changes within the spaces to which they formed the original boundaries. This is yet another reminder that settlement is not just about buildings, but also the spaces within which they subsist.

Some morphological elements can be extensive, going beyond the local. Transportation networks, by their nature, relate to the sub-regional, regional and even national levels, as well as having their local significance. Roads and pathways of all kinds, navigable waterways and railways contribute to an often-complex system of transportation and access to property and resources.

Morphological elements are often described in the narrative by their spatial impact. This includes plot size and shape and whether building lines are continuous or their relationship to street boundaries (i.e. back of

pavement). If a settlement has more than one centre it may be described as 'polyfocal'. The nature of field boundaries (hedged or fenced) and the size and pattern of fields are also important. Morphologies where the elements are regular and in close proximity may be described as 'closely grained', whilst those that are more widely spaced and irregular may be termed 'open grained'.

In most cases, morphological elements relate to specific historic phases, which help to define the settlement's morphogenesis. However, there are some features that may be difficult to relate to a particular period of morphology or are sole relicts of an otherwise defunct morphology⁷. Their significance will vary, but frequently they will have an importance or interest beyond the scope of their observable appearance and their residual nature alone being worthy of note. Relic features of this sort are frequently overlooked by broader studies such as HLC.

Socio-economic Context

The significance of morphological elements can often only be fully understood within their socio-economic context: for example, the home of a significant historical person, or a building where an important event took place. Consequently the methodology provides for the interpretation of elements that help to give meaning to the physical morphology that is observable on the ground. Furthermore, socio-economic aspects may function within either the local or sub-regional arena, and will be affected at times by outside influences at the national (and even international) level.

Typically socio-economic aspects will be intangible or transitory and some are very specific to individual features, such as land use and previous

⁷ An example is the pattern of streets at Godmanchester that follow the course of the now long since lost walls of the Roman *vicus*.

land use patterns, and changes in building use or function. Sometimes, they relate to broader themes like the form of land tenure and the relationship between the owners and occupiers of land. They may also have a more general focus that affects the social and economic organisation of the settlement as a whole.

Identification of Principal Themes

Principal themes are ones that relate to overarching issues emerging from the study areas during the progress of the research. In practice the principle themes depend on the prior identification of the morphological and interpretative elements discussed above. Principle themes arising from the two study areas are considered in Chapter 13.

Synthesising the Narrative

The results of the research into the study areas need to be presented in a coherent way. A narrative form is preferred because it allows for a full account and explanation of a settlement's morphology to be realised. This synthesis will integrate the morphological and interpretative analysis with emerging principle themes, eventually locating them within a layered appreciation of historic phases (the time line). The final narrative will depend upon suitable illustrative material to convey the spatial aspects of settlements in the study areas. Even though maps and plans will often best convey spatial elements, the inclusion of illustrations from 'ground level' is particularly important for imparting the character of a place and realism of view.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Narratives may be used to inform a number of local planning and management activities: for example, conservation area assessments and

boundary reviews; design codes and development control advice; or urban design initiatives; community or parish plans. Each one of these requires their own presentational form — possibly based on geographical information systems (GIS) - but also using text, illustrations and other graphic representations. Thus, there may be many forms of presentation drawn from the same analysis depending on the requirements of the local planners, developers and the communities themselves. Using the results of the analysis and making decisions about presentation is discussed in greater detail in the chapter 13.

The methodology formulated in this study is particularly suited for spatial analysis of settlement form, but recording local character is also important. The narratives produced for the two study areas, whilst recording local character in a general way, have not included a full inventory of architectural detail and materials used in the built environment, mainly because of limitations on space.

The earlier discussion on the ‘sense of place’ proposed that it is the differences *between* places, rather than the *similarities*, that people value most and which helps to define for them a sense of place. It was also recognised, however, that this seems to be at odds with the method adopted by many professional archaeologists, landscape historians and historical geographers, for whom identifying and characterising the commonalities between rural historic settlements to underpin models and taxonomies has been given priority. The result has been, over the last forty years in particular, a tendency to iron out local differences in the quest for identifying regional distinctiveness — a process that, when applied to actual planning decisions, has arguably contributed to the rather characterless nature of many of our market towns and villages. The methodology

discussed in this chapter aims to promote the analysis of the historical environment to better support the local planning process, and enhance and protect the local community's sense of place. This can best be achieved through a narrative encapsulating the settlement's history that recognises its differences from, as well as its similarities to, neighbouring settlements.

Part Three:
THE RESEARCH

CHAPTER 5: PREFACE TO THE FIELD RESEARCH

“In exploring the origins of settlement...each line of argument necessarily brings us back, in the last resort, to the evidence of the landscape — the only record we possess, in so many ways, of the language of settlement”¹

¹ Everitt 1986, 348-349

INTRODUCTION

In the quote for this chapter Alan Everitt, in the concluding remarks to his book about the evolution of Kentish settlement, reminds us of the importance of the study of landscape to an understanding of settlement. It is in this spirit that Section Three of the thesis sets forth the outcome of two complex studies of rural settlement in two very different areas of southern England. Following on from the general approach to the field research given previously, this chapter offers an explanation of how this methodology was applied, together with the aims and research objectives for each area. Finally, there is an overview of the topography and settlement pattern for each of the study areas.

CONDUCT OF THE FIELD RESEARCH

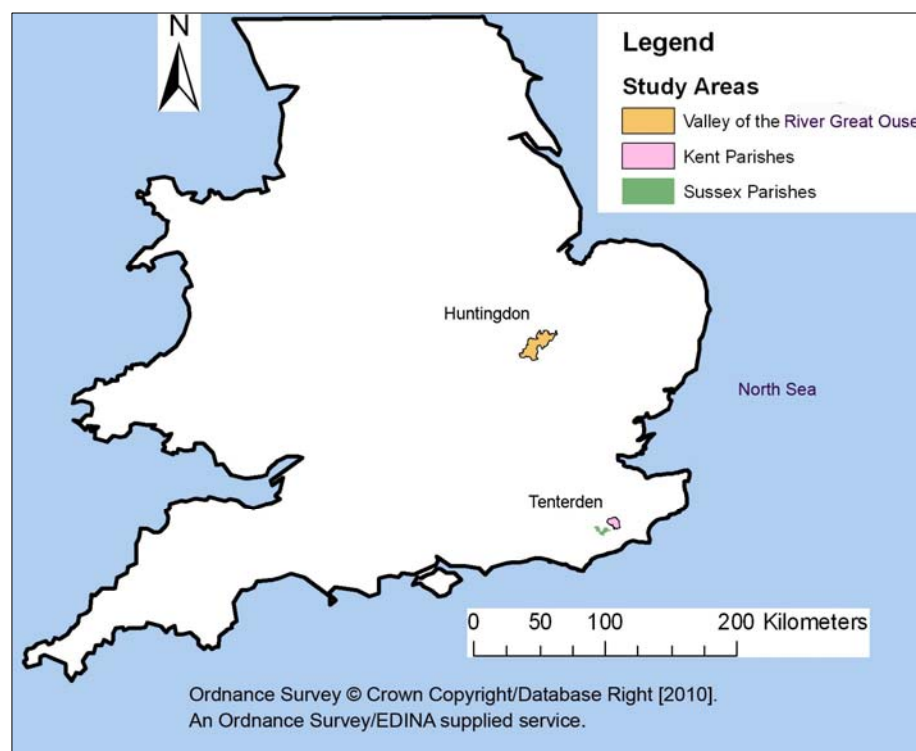
Choice of Study Areas

The choice of areas was made partly on the basis of the diversity of landscape character and settlement patterns between and within the selected areas, but also for practical considerations. Accessibility, for example, was important and accounts for why the areas are both in the south of England — although at a considerable distance from each other. Another criteria was the willingness of local planning authorities and others to support and co-operate with the study; an important consideration because the final test for a work of this kind is that it should prove acceptable in practice to those responsible for protecting the historical environment. Therefore, this research has benefited immensely through having many of its outcomes tested within the context of actual development control initiatives and other planning scenarios.

Main Landscape Features

The selected study areas are situated in the modern county of Cambridgeshire and in the High Weald of Kent and East Sussex (Plan 5.1).

Plan 5.1 Location of Study Areas: Valley of the River Great Ouse, Huntingdonshire and the eastern High Weald



In Cambridgeshire the study area consists of those parishes along the River Great Ouse as it passes through the southern part of the historic county of Huntingdonshire. Huntingdonshire had very pronounced communal farming practices until Parliamentary Inclosure during the second half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. However, it is also an area with ancient forest and woodland over the clay uplands away from the Ouse valley, making for interesting variations in character and historic settlement pattern. In the High Weald two clusters of parishes were selected, situated where the River Rother and its tributaries emerge from the Wealden uplands before flowing into the Romney Marsh

levels. The traditional pattern of agriculture in this area was for farms to be held in severalty.

The broad differences in types of landscape demonstrated by these two study areas reflect a general observation about the English countryside. As early as the sixteenth century Thomas Tusser and William Harrison drew a distinction between the two types of countryside that we would now call ‘champion’² and ‘woodland’ (Tusser 1573, quoted in Rackham 2000, 5; Harrison 1577, quoted in Williamson 2003, 11) and which Maitland called the land of villages and the land of hamlets (Maitland 1960 [first published 1897], 38). Earlier commentators recognised that these two distinct landscape types were found in different parts of the country, but it was not until more recent times that their distribution was mapped and their nature more closely defined. Oliver Rackham’s analysis of regional types of landscape is probably the best known, and in his *History of the Countryside* (1986) Rackham distinguishes two landscape types in lowland England: what he calls ‘ancient countryside’ and ‘planned countryside’ (Rackham 2000, 3-5). The differences between them are shown in Table 5.1 and their distribution in Figure 5.1. Others have attempted their own interpretations of the data, which has usually resulted in broadly similar regional distributions, but with considerable variation of detail.

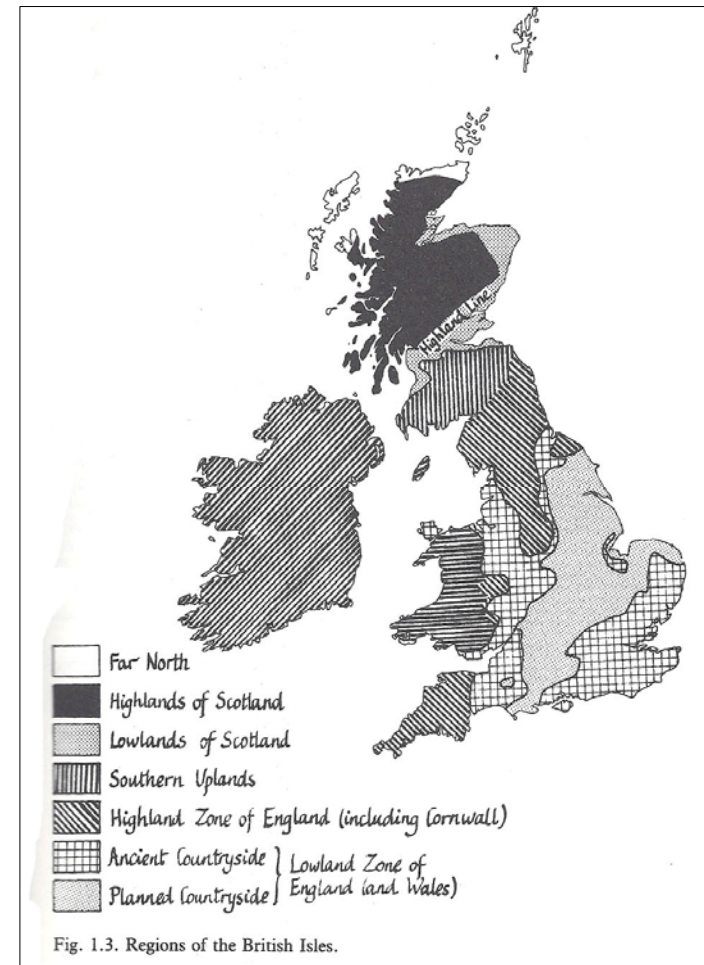
² ‘Champion’ is a term originally used to describe a landscape of open fields (derived from the sweeping countryside of the *Champagne* region of France), and which is now used for landscapes of later enclosure and nucleated villages.

Table 5.1 Rackham's Ancient and Planned Countryside (Rackham, 2000, 4&5)

Table 1.1 Modern differences between Ancient Countryside and Planned Countryside	
Ancient Countryside	Planned Countryside
Hamlets and small towns	Villages
Ancient isolated farms	Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century isolated farms
Hedges mainly mixed, not straight	Hedges mainly hawthorn, straight
Roads many, not straight, often sunken	Roads few, straight, on the surface
Many public footpaths	Few footpaths
Woods many, often small	Woods absent or few and large
Pollard trees, if present, away from habitations	Pollard trees (except riverside willows) absent or only in villages
Many antiquities of all periods	Antiquities few, usually prehistoric

Table 1.2 Historic differences between Ancient Countryside and Planned Countryside	
Ancient Countryside	Planned Countryside
Open-field either absent or of modest extent and abolished before c. 1700	Strong tradition of open-field beginning early and lasting into Enclosure Act period
Most hedges ancient	Most hedges modern
Many, though often small, woods	Woods absent or few and large
Much heathland	Heaths rare; little bracken or broom
Non-woodland trees oak, ash, alder, birch	Non-woodland thorns and elders
Many ponds	Few ponds

Figure 5.1 Distribution of Ancient and Planned Countryside (Rackham 2000, 3)



In terms of these regional distributions defined at a national scale, the Weald fits well into the notion of ‘ancient countryside’ with a settlement pattern of hamlets with occasional villages and many dispersed farmsteads (Roberts 1977, 16). However, the situation in Huntingdonshire is not so clear-cut. The Huntingdonshire Ouse valley lies within what is often considered the area of classic ‘champion country’ of the Central Midlands (with its nucleated settlement and two or three field-system). Away from the river valley itself, in medieval times, it was a landscape of more dispersed settlement, woodland, and irregular fields (Everitt 1986, 344). The fact that this part of Huntingdonshire has elements of both types of countryside makes it very difficult to characterise convincingly in simplistic terms. It may be worth considering the implications that if this is true of other areas as well that there are dangers in broad regional classifications of this type.

Parish Focus

Within the Huntingdonshire study area there are thirty civil parishes that broadly correspond to the territory covered by the Ouse Valley townships that were recorded in Domesday, and this study looks at each of these parishes to a greater or lesser degree. However, it was decided to exclude Huntingdon itself from the study area for the following reasons. Although Huntingdon was partly a farming community it was also much more, becoming early on an urbanised centre with local administrative responsibilities, developing a distinctive historic morphology (Page et al 1974, 121-135): for example, Huntingdon was a borough before 1086 and the County Town subsequently, giving it a more complex morphological history than other Ouse Valley settlements.

The Wealden parishes chosen for this study have been selected as representative of High Weald parishes as they have developed in Kent and

East Sussex either side of the county boundary. Benenden, Rolvenden and Newenden on the Kent side and Etchingham, Salehurst and Bodiam on the Sussex side are parishes situated along the valley of the River Rother and its tributaries. Each of the two clusters of three parishes (covering a total area of about 24,500 acres) illustrates the variations in size, topography, and tenurial arrangements that both typify the area, and demonstrate its differences. Bodiam and Newenden, the eastern most parishes in each of their clusters, are set amongst the fringes of low-lying land that form the western approaches to the great Romney Marsh system. As with the Great Ouse, the Rother has been the focus of human activity from the earliest times and has historically provided easily accessible passage from the coastal regions to their hinterland. In fact the geographical relationship of the High Weald to the Romney marsh series of wetlands bears a remarkable similarity to that of Huntingdonshire to the Fens and the Wash.

Approach to the Research

The methodology for the research into the study areas followed that described in Chapter 4, using the civil parish as the unit of study. An initial period of desk-based research identified information and material from a number of sources, particularly the record offices local to the areas of study. This was organised under parish headings and later associated with the sub-regional context. Information on topography, geology, drainage and climate were brought together for each area to form the environmental framework for later analysis. Subsequently, field observations were carried out over the extent of the study areas in order to relate the results of the desk research and check what features were still extant, and identify others that may not have been previously recorded. In practice, the desk-based research and the field-based research formed an iterative process, with both activities

happening over a period of time, one constantly informing the other. Through this process it was possible to reconcile observed and researched data and analyse settlement in its landscape over time.

During the course of this process the principle morphological elements, such as buildings and spatial features, were identified. Similarly, the more intangible elements that help to interpret and give meaning to the morphological elements emerged. Of particular importance was learning to understand how the landscape of settlement is experienced: at its most basic this was achieved by relating the topography to what was observed and assessing the visual impact of landscape features. In this way it was possible, for example, to estimate the experiential impact of modern development upon the historic settlement morphology. The views and ideas of local people were also a valuable source for helping to understand perceptions of the landscape: however, their input was not collected systematically and their contribution was uneven and sometimes difficult to merge into the academic research. There is a case for a social science dimension to the methodology, but developing this was beyond the scope of this study. Finally, information gained during the research helped to form a view about significant and principal themes affecting the settlements within the study areas.

Structure of the Study

The way in which the study for each of the areas has been structured very much reflects the principal themes that emerged from the research. Some of these themes were similar in both areas, particularly at the very general level (for example, establishing the date of the origins and formation of the present day settlement pattern, and the substantive change to the settlement morphology subsequently) — all of these themes have been

incorporated within the framework of the study. The detail, understandably enough, is different in each area so that the content of these overarching themes vary and the sources used differ. Therefore, although the structure of the analysis for each of the chosen study areas follows a similar pattern, the detail is tailored to the specific needs of each.

The final section for each study area explores aspects of the historical development of settlement morphology on the contemporary landscape, drawn from some of the issues of especial importance locally. Thus, in the case of Huntingdonshire, where the impact of urbanisation is of especial importance, the morphology of St Neots is explored in greater detail. For the Wealden parishes, a more generalised analysis of how the landscape is experienced within the current settlement morphology is considered.

There were some important issues that impinged on how each of the areas were perceived that needed to be addressed at an early stage; these, unlike the general themes mentioned above, were localised and could be framed as a series of research questions. These questions gave direction to some of the research elements and a structure to the form of some of the topics covered in the study. The specific issues for the two study areas are as follows.

Specific Issues Relating to the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley

The Huntingdonshire Ouse valley forms a topographically coherent sub-region, which it was felt, should be considered in its entirety at some level of analysis. At just under 64,000 acres [26,000H] it is too large within the scope of this particular research project to allow an equally detailed analysis for each parish within it. However, it was possible to look at all of the settlements within the area to a sufficient degree of detail to record their

individuality as well as their shared features. This has enabled the study to provide a convincing level of sub-regional analysis to enable individual settlements to be contextualised. One of the issues to emerge from this was that the perception of Huntingdonshire as simply 'planned countryside' is wrong.

The level of continued development pressure is known to be high throughout the sub-region; the impact of late twentieth century development is noticeable in many settlements in the area. Therefore, it was thought necessary to pay particular attention to the effects of that issue on the landscape. The approach adopted was to make a special study of St Neots, a new town formed from a number of previously rural settlements that have been adsorbed fairly recently into a decidedly urbanised context. Consequently, St Neots has undergone a rapid morphogenesis that has created, for this part of Huntingdonshire, a challenging settlement form with particular management needs.

Specific Issues Relating to the Eastern High Weald

The High Weald is an extensive area that lies within four modern county council areas and contains 1461 square kilometres, of which about 65% is in the eastern High Weald (HWAONB JAC 2009, 15). The six parishes selected are, therefore, a sample chosen to represent topographically similar clusters in Kent and East Sussex, near but not contiguous to each other. The High Weald shares a common (if varied) geology and appears topographically similar across its sub-region. However, a perception shared by many people living in the High Weald is that there are differences in how the two counties are experienced on the ground. This may be due in part to topographical differences, or the way settlements have developed. For example, manorial organisation in Kent and East Sussex was

slightly different, and Kent had a separate system of land law (see Appendix C). One of the issues that this study will explore is whether this has led to real (if subtle) differences in the landscape between the two county areas.

Another issue of perception concerns the long-term impact that the earliest Anglo-Saxon settlement has had upon the landscape. The High Weald is actively promoted today as an area formed and colonised by a process of transhumance organised by manors beyond the Weald (<http://www.highweald.org/>). This has become such a powerful image that it warrants some degree of investigation, especially as it may effect planning decisions. Consequently, the areas' early history is explored further in Appendix E.

The High Weald, as a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, has an extensive and well co-ordinated protection regime. However, it still actually operates within the same statutory planning framework as other areas. What is different for an AONB is the regulatory involvement of a wide range of organisations, with statutory responsibilities for a range of concerns including the countryside and historical environment protection. How local planning authorities manage this process is of interest (albeit outside the scope of this study), but the issue of describing and analysing the historical environment in an area of very dispersed settlement for a planning regime that was originally designed for an urbanised, or built upon landscape, is pertinent.

SOURCES

A wide range of primary sources was used including those shown in Table 5.2. Whilst all classes of sources were referred to at some point during the research, relatively more use tended to be made of the plan, map and

visual material. Not all types of source were relevant for each area as the morphogenesis of each area was different: for example, tithe surveys were more significant in the High Weald, where inclosure awards were unknown. Tithe awards were less important in Huntingdonshire, where tithes and other land issues were most often dealt with on the occasion of Parliamentary Inclosure, an event that occurred in most of the target parishes there. This obviously affected what information could be gathered and influenced how settlement history was studied and understood.

Table 5.2: Principal Primary Sources

- | | |
|----|---|
| a) | Tithe maps, apportionments and Tithe files; |
| b) | Inclosure maps and awards (plans showing both pre and post enclosure landscapes); |
| c) | Estate maps and surveys; |
| d) | Parish surveys (other than tithe and enclosure); |
| e) | Title deeds and other documents relating to land tenure (for example, farm leases); |
| f) | Wills and inventories; |
| g) | Land Tax and Hearth Tax assessments; |
| h) | Ordnance Survey maps (from 19 th century); |
| i) | Early printed material; |
| j) | Aerial photographs; historic photographs and illustrations. |

Secondary sources including books, journals, specialist websites and unpublished academic works were consulted and are recorded in the bibliography. On occasions, personal comments from experts, including planners, developers, academics and local residents were elicited and are referenced in the text.

Most of these resources were accessed through the relevant County Record Offices. Those relating to the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley were The Huntingdonshire Record Office; The Cambridgeshire Record Office; and The Bedfordshire and Luton Record Office, Bedford (including copies of records by the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford and their constituent colleges found at all three archives). For the High Weald the relevant archives were at The Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone; The

East Sussex Record Office at Lewes; and The Canterbury Cathedral Archives. Some records (particularly the Tithe Files) are held by the National Archive at Kew. Occasional records are held elsewhere.

INTRODUCTION TO THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE OUSE VALLEY

This section looks at some key topographical and settlement issues, which underpin the broader analysis that follows in subsequent chapters. It deals in general terms with the settlement pattern and morphology throughout the Ouse Valley sub-region, as well as the setting of the Ouse valley within the broader landscape of Huntingdonshire; but it also looks more specifically at St Neots and its environs. The landscape history of St Neots is important in the contemporary context because modern development has created a truly urban morphology from what were previously neighbouring rural settlements.

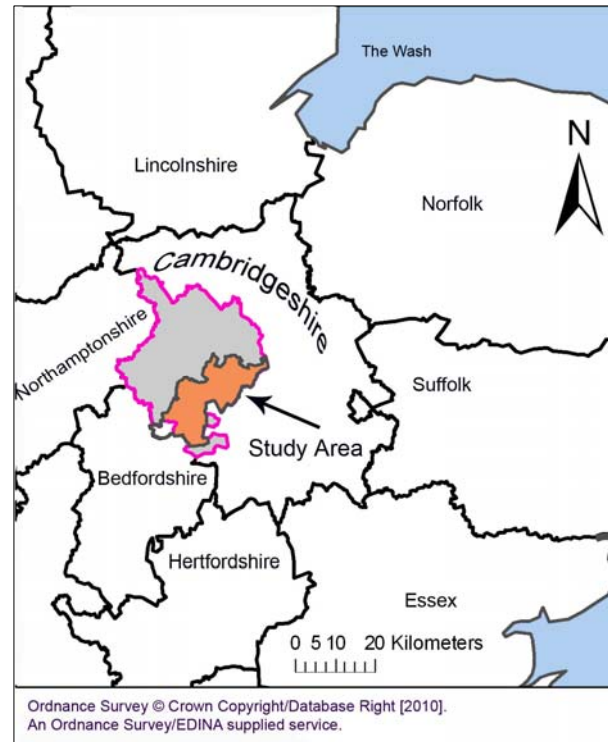
Topographical Overview

The District of Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire was formally a county in its own right, extending from the Nene at Peterborough in the north [TL085996] to just beyond the valley of the Great Ouse in the south [TL221528], and from the Fens in the east [TL399752] to approximately the watershed of the Great Ouse drainage system to the west [TL022752]. The historic county of Huntingdonshire was contiguous with Northamptonshire in the north and west, Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely on the east and southeast, and Bedfordshire on the southwest. In 1965 Huntingdonshire was merged with the Soke of Peterborough and in 1974 it became a district council in the enlarged County of Cambridgeshire. The total area of the modern District is 900

square kilometres (347.5 square miles), and the population estimated by the Office of National Statistics in 2005 was 162,000. Plan 5.2

Plan 5.2 Geographical Location of the Valley of the River Great Ouse, Huntingdonshire



The topography of Huntingdonshire is dominated by the rivers Nene and Great Ouse, which flow in a general easterly direction into the Fenlands and eventually into the Wash. There are three specific topographical elements to the District — the Nene valley in the north, the valley of the Great Ouse in the south and the Fens to the East. This study is concerned with settlement along the Great Ouse, which flows through a well-defined valley until it meets the fen edge beyond St Ives. Plan 5.3

Geology

The base geology of Huntingdonshire is predominantly Oxford Clay overlaid with glacial deposits, for the most part Boulder Clay. However, at the extreme eastern edge of the District, beyond St Ives, the Oxford Clay is

itself overlain with Coralian beds and Kimmeridge Clay, both of which outcrop in places. Only in the north-western edge of the District (outside the study area) does the Great and Inferior Oolitic series outcrop as a local source of freestone (Edmunds and Dinham 1965). Throughout the length of the valley of the river Great Ouse there are extensive deposits of river gravels (three distinguishable terraces) and alluvium. Plan 5.4

Soils, Land Use and Climate

Soils in the study area are predominantly deep clay, except in the river valleys where the soil is loam or gravelly loam and sandy gravel. These lighter soils have attracted settlement from prehistoric times and the majority of the larger medieval settlements were located along the valley of the Great Ouse. To the east, where the Ouse flows into the fens, the soils are peaty³. Plan 5.5.

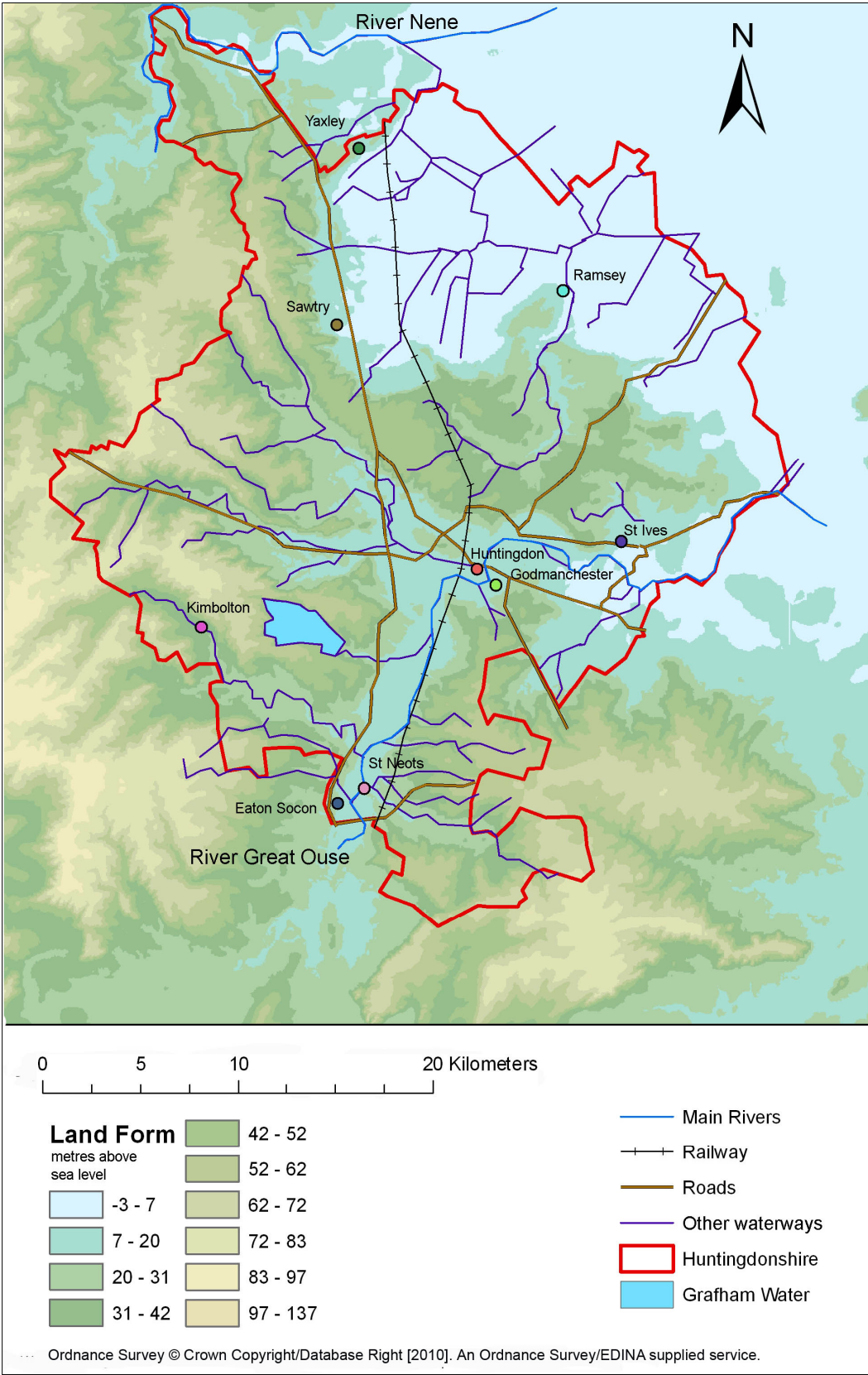
Generally the soil is fertile, and at the time of Parliamentary Inclosure, Huntingdonshire retained its arable land and was not generally laid down to pasture. Much of the present land use continues to be arable, frequently using enlarged 'prairie' type fields, which have seen the removal of many of the hedges planted at the time of Parliamentary Inclosure. Pasture is mainly found as meadow-land in the river valleys.

In terms of its climate, Huntingdonshire is one of the driest parts of the country. Over the last fifty years whilst the average temperature has corresponded to the national average, rainfall has been only about 60% of the national average⁴.

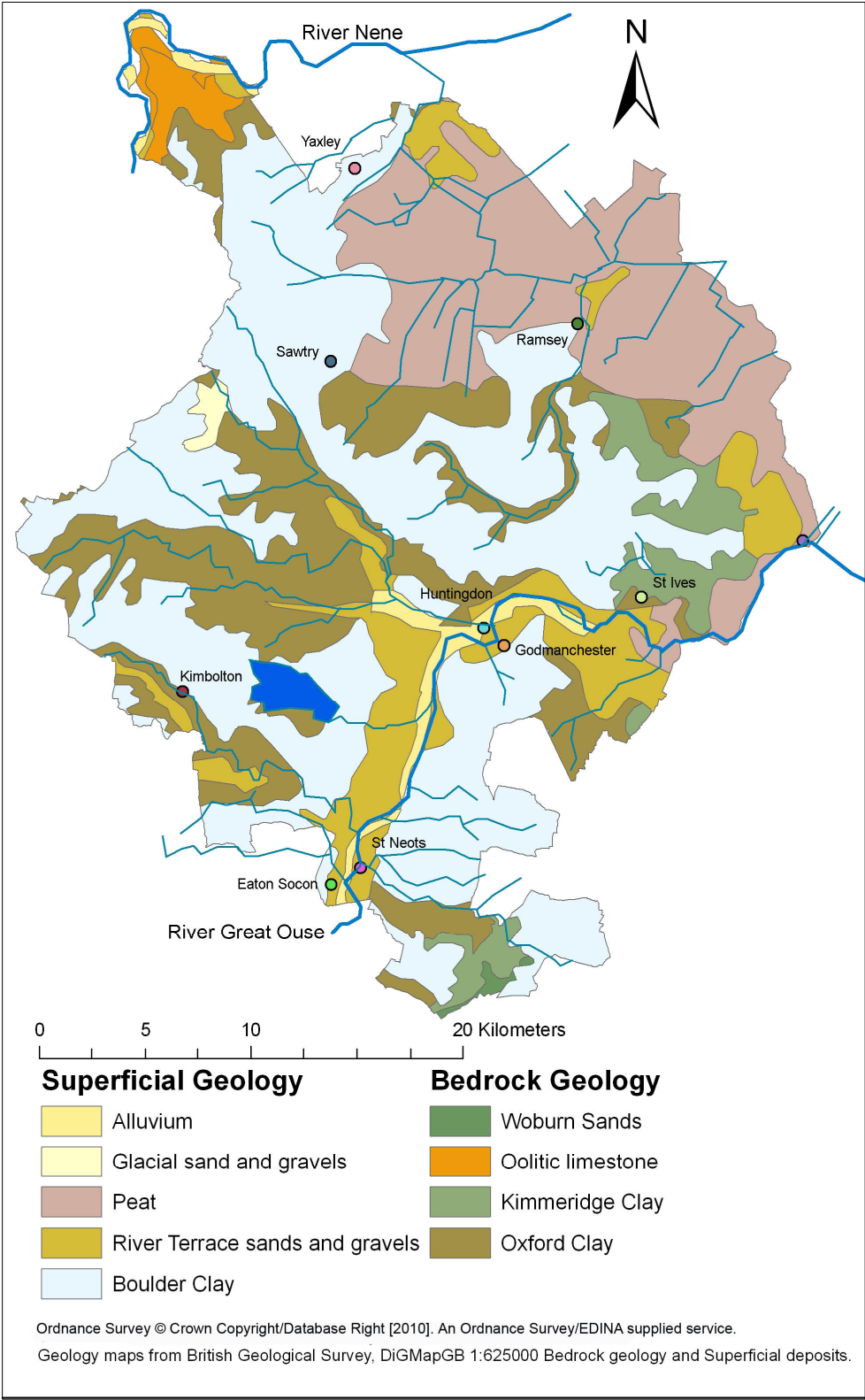
³ Soils data supplied by the National Soils Resources Institute, Cranfield University.

⁴ Based on statistics supplied by the Meteorological Office.

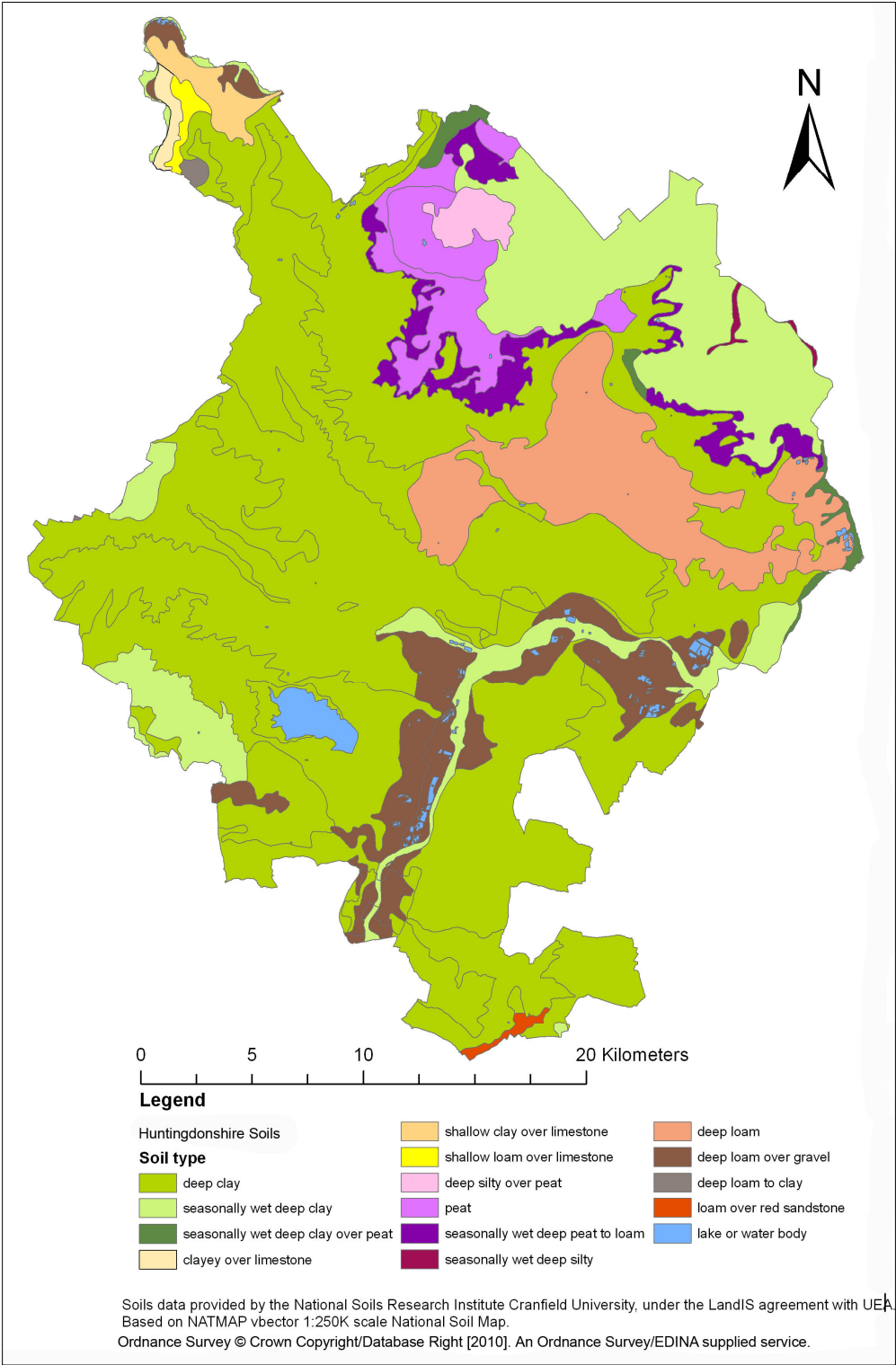
Plan 5.3 Huntingdonshire Topography



Plan 5.4 Geology of Huntingdonshire



Plan 5.5 Soils of Huntingdonshire



The Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley

The valley of the Great Ouse forms a distinctive sub-region within Huntingdonshire and is home to three of the district's four medieval market towns⁵. The Ouse enters Huntingdonshire at St Neots, from whence it flows to Earith, a distance of nearly thirty kilometres. From St Neots, the river flows in a north-north-easterly direction for about thirteen kilometres until it reaches Godmanchester and Huntingdon, where the Roman road from London to the North crossed the Ouse (still a major bridging point). From here, it flows eastwards for approximately a further fifteen kilometres, eventually leaving Huntingdonshire at Earith. For the last seven kilometres the river once formed the county boundary between Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire, but is now the district boundary between Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. Beyond St Ives the Ouse valley broadens further as it enters the fen edge and beyond Earith (the last outpost of Huntingdonshire) the fen proper starts. The fen edge occurs at about 6 metres AOD, with the pockets of fenland in this part of Huntingdonshire rarely falling below 4 metres. Plan 5.6

The Great Ouse has carved out a wide, shallow valley. Various tributaries join the Ouse along its length, the major ones being as follows. On the west bank: the Duloe Brook, River Kim (previously the Hayle), Diddington Brook, and Alconbury Brook. On the east bank: Hen Brook, Gallow Brook, Stoneyhill Brook. On the north bank: Heath Drain. On the south bank: West Brook, and Hall Green Brook. The Old Bedford River and the New Bedford River take the waters of the Ouse away towards the Wash

⁵ Godmanchester, although commonly considered an ancient market town today, never officially had a market of its own during the Middle Ages. The fourth medieval market in Huntingdonshire was at Ramsey, situated at the edge of the fens.

at Earith, but the old course of the river flows southeast from this point towards Cambridge and the confluence with the River Cam.

Although subdued, the topography of the land is interesting. The higher land is mostly in the west of the district, forming the interfluvium between the Ouse and Nene drainage systems. These western hills are generally referred to as the Wolds — a dissected plateau, which rises to between 70 and 80 metres. Where the Great Ouse and its tributaries have cut through the Boulder Clay to expose the Oxford Clay, it gives the countryside a gentle rolling quality. Up on the Wolds there are some fine distant views that give the overall impression of height, despite the flattish nature of the plateau itself; close up, however, habitation tends to be obscured by the folds in the landform. Along the river valley of the Great Ouse itself (where most habitation is situated) local views are more open, and is particularly so where the Ouse valley meets the fen to the east. To the west of the Ouse there are a number of large woods set on the hill tops, some of which are ancient woodland, and these can be seen from a great distance. In fact, in the Middle Ages these woodlands formed part of extensive area of forest land throughout Huntingdonshire (Wickes 1995, 41-42). In the main, though, the landscape today is not well wooded and is one of open agricultural land. Generally, the countryside along the Ouse Valley is surprisingly varied, but not spectacular. Plate 5.1

Plan 5.6 Topography of the Ouse Valley

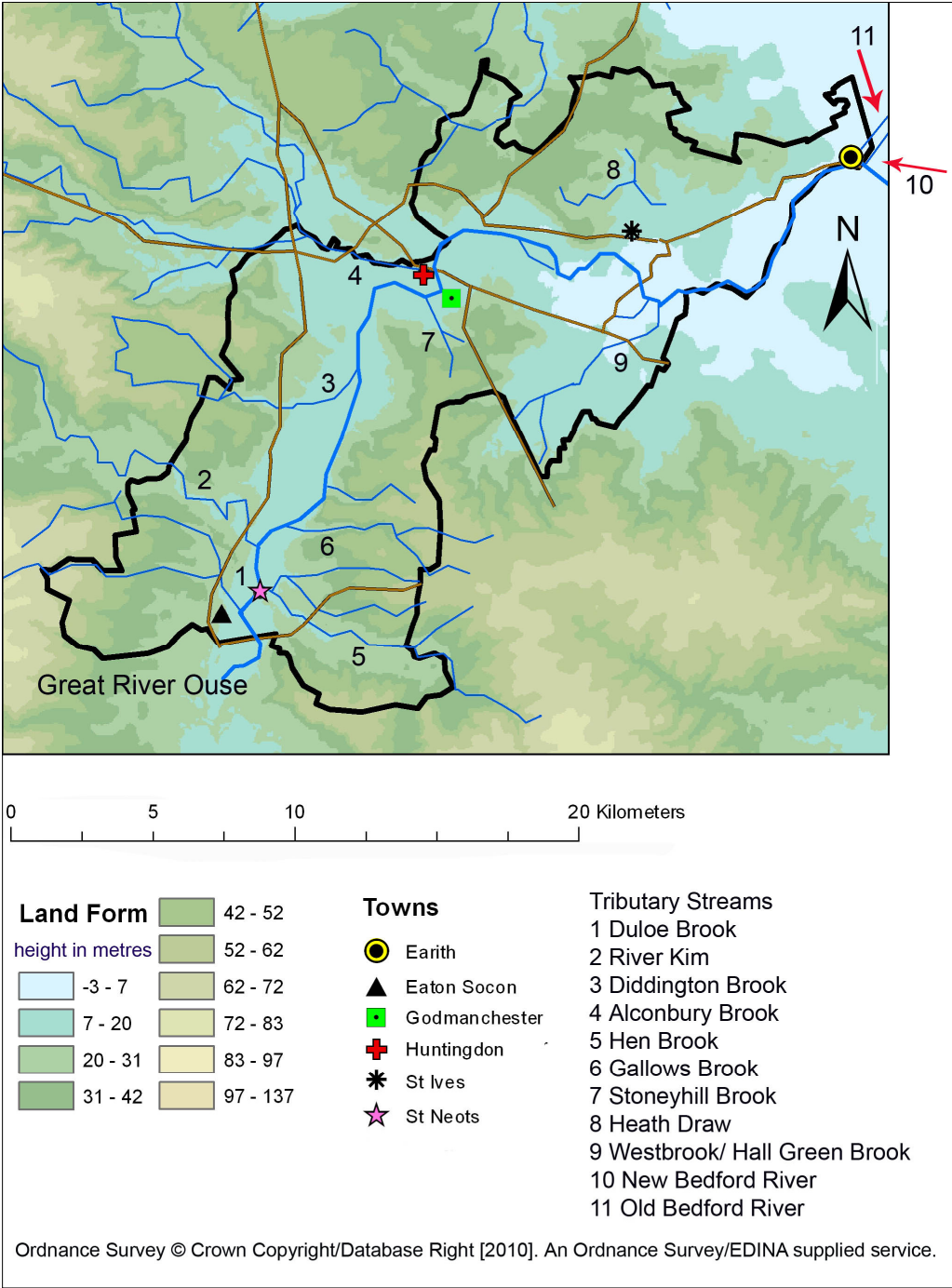


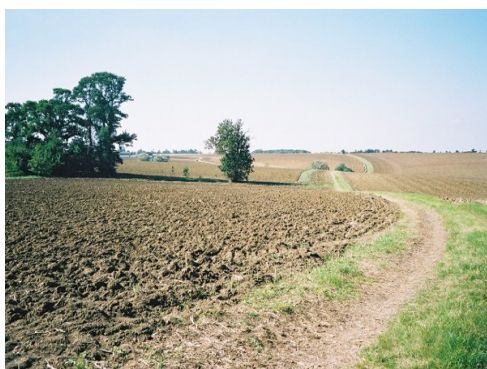
Plate 5. 1 Valley of the River Great Ouse Today



Ouse Valley at St Ives



Ouse Valley Flood Plain at Godmanchester West Common



Arable land near Toseland



Woodland at Little Paxton



Woodhurst, looking south across heavily dissected plateau towards Ouse Valley



Looking south east from Stirtloe, across Ouse Valley, towards Great Paxton

The Rural Settlement Pattern in the Ouse Valley

The detailed settlement morphology of the civil parishes within the Huntingdonshire Ouse valley is complex. As well as the more easily settled land abutting the river itself, many parishes contain areas of fen or clay woodlands that were previously quite remote — Huntingdonshire is not just planned countryside. The settlements on the valley bottom are on some of the most anciently and continuously settled lands within Huntingdonshire, with evidence of human habitation going back to at least the Neolithic and in places the Mesolithic⁶. However, the current settlement pattern is the accumulated product of a settlement history that began with the impact of Saxon Settlement on the Romano-British inheritance since the fifth century, modified by post-Conquest developments (particularly those of the twelfth century), and more recently by the urbanisation of rural England in the later half of the twentieth century.

Principal Towns

The four market towns of the Huntingdonshire Ouse are Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots, and Godmanchester. Of these, Huntingdon had borough status in the Middle Ages; Godmanchester became a self-governing manor in 1212, but was not incorporated until 1604 (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 287-290); St Ives, despite its important medieval fair and market status, was not incorporated until 1874 (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 210); St Neots was granted a market charter by Henry I (reigned 1100-1135, but exact date of charter unknown) but was never incorporated (Gorham 1824, 143). Huntingdon was a moderately important town from late Saxon times and from the nature of the Domesday entry seems to have had a measure of self-governance in 1086, attaining full borough status by the twelfth century. As

⁶ Based on a summary of results from the Cambridgeshire Heritage Environment Record.

the County town (and now as the District capital) it has developed somewhat differently to the other towns and a detailed analysis is not pursued in this study, which is primarily concerned with rural settlements principally dependent on agriculture.

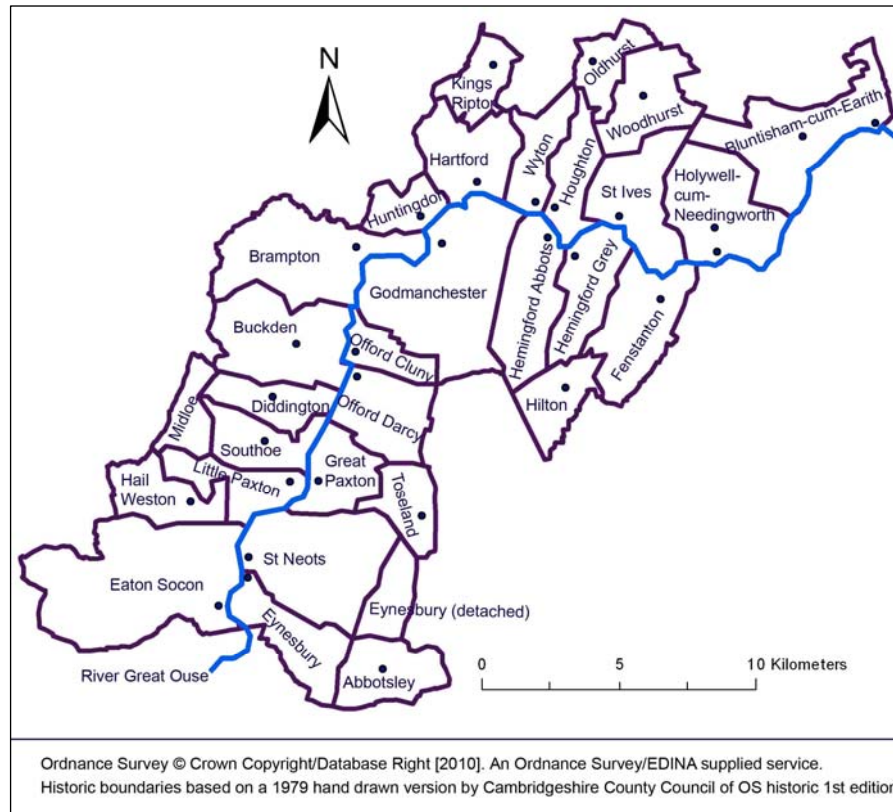
Geographical Arrangement of Parishes

The Huntingdonshire parishes that have the Ouse as a common boundary form small groups of geographically opposed communities, both divided and united by the river. Thus St Neots (the historic parish) and Eynesbury oppose Eaton Socon (previously in Bedfordshire) but connected together by the bridging point⁷; Little Paxton and Southoe oppose Great Paxton, to which in former times they were connected by ferry; Diddington is opposite Offord Darcy, but without a river crossing; Buckden is opposite Offord Cluny and connected by a bridge; Brampton, Huntingdon and Hartford are opposite Godmanchester, all effectively served by the Huntingdon and Godmanchester town bridge. Additionally, there is a footbridge between Godmanchester and Brampton; Houghton and Wyton and St Ives are opposite Hemingford Abbots, Hemingford Grey and Fenstanton, there is a major crossing point at St Ives and at one time there were possibly two fords connecting the Hemingfords and Houghton and Wyton; Holywell-cum-Needlingworth is opposite Fenstanton and Swavesey (both in South Cambridgeshire District and neither in the study area) they previously had a ferry; Bluntisham and Earith are opposite Over (South Cambridgeshire, not in study area). The age of these crossing points vary, and it is not always possible to date them accurately. The crossing at Godmanchester is certainly Roman, as may be that at St Neots. The crossing

⁷ This enabled much social and economic contact between these settlements prior to the nineteenth and twentieth century boundary changes (Gorham 1824).

at St Ives was certainly there in the Middle Ages, and many of the others may have been too (these are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7). It should also be born in mind that portorage along the Ouse in previous times made all of these settlements less isolated by the river than they appear today.

Plan 5.7 Parish Boundaries in the Study Area



Location of Settlement

The principle settlements for each of the above mentioned parishes are strongly associated with the river gravels of the Ouse (the exception is Great Paxton, where the principle settlement is on the boulder clay) and are situated at or below 25 metres AOD. Below Huntingdon, however, riparian settlement heights are usually below the 15-metre contour. Additional settlement away from the river occurs in many of the Ouse parishes, situated principally on the boulder clay and typically between the 30 and 50

metre contours. These settlements can be ancient hamlets or moated sites⁸, but also more recent post-Inclosures farms. The issue of settlement origins will be looked at in greater detail below, but the underlying pattern of the modern day settlement structure was already in place by the twelfth century. Proximity of settlement varies considerably, with many of the principle settlements clustered quite closely together on either side of the Great Ouse, where a separation of about two kilometres or even less is not uncommon. Perhaps more surprisingly, therefore, is that this further settlement can occur at a distance of three kilometres, or even greater away from the primary sites. The issue of settlement dispersal is considered in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

Parish Boundaries

The parish boundaries in some places appear quite arbitrary, but in many places follow either topographical features or other established features such as roads. Some of these boundaries date to at least Saxon times; others were created during a period of parish building in the twelfth century. Still others have been created or modified more recently, particularly as local governance developed through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a response to settlement enlargement and the growth in local government responsibilities and services. The river and its tributary streams are particularly important (as could be anticipated) and watersheds are also typical choices, often with ancient trackways also associated with them. Lines of communication such as rivers and roads have proved significant in the past for establishing boundaries and this tendency is true over a long time period; with examples in the study area of boundaries being

⁸ There have been various claims for the number and age of moated sites in the area and whilst some are undisputed, others have been challenged and many are difficult to date accurately (see HER for Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire).

based upon Roman roads, often themselves built along the lines of more ancient trackways (Margary 1955, 177). In more recent times some of the newer boundaries in the St Neots area have been based on railway lines.

The rural settlement pattern within the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley remained remarkably unchanged since the twelfth century and the development of its morphology had been constrained within relatively fixed parameters until modern times. Large-scale development since 1950 has rapidly expanded nearly all these settlements (often involving the planned re-settlement of London overspill populations). As a result there has been a real shift in the scale and pace of settlement development with many settlements now housing many times their traditional populations. This has created huge development pressures, particularly on the historic environment. In some places, settlements have grown together to form new administrative units — of which St Neots is a primary example.

St Neots and Environs

St Neots is located approximately 22 kilometres south of Huntingdon [grid reference TL5287/2880 - see Plan 5.3]. The settlements out of which it was formed are situated on either side of the River Great Ouse. Those on the east bank were in the historic county of Huntingdonshire, whilst those on the west bank were part of the historic parish of Eaton Socon in Bedfordshire. The present town was constituted when the county boundary was extended westwards in 1965 and, later, the whole area was incorporated into Cambridgeshire at the time of the local government reorganisation in 1972-4. The Civil Parish prior to April 2010 contained 1033 hectares (2552

acres), and the population in 2001 was 26,510 (25,510 in 1991) [National Office of Statistics⁹].

In its complexity St Neots is untypical of other settlements in Huntingdonshire where growth has occurred by expanding single settlements rather than through amalgamation¹⁰. However, the potential is there for growth of this type to occur in the future elsewhere in the District. Whereas in the economic and social sense most settlement in Huntingdonshire has been urbanised, the contemporary town of St Neots also has an urbanised morphology — that is, a number of once separate settlements have been absorbed into a greater whole.

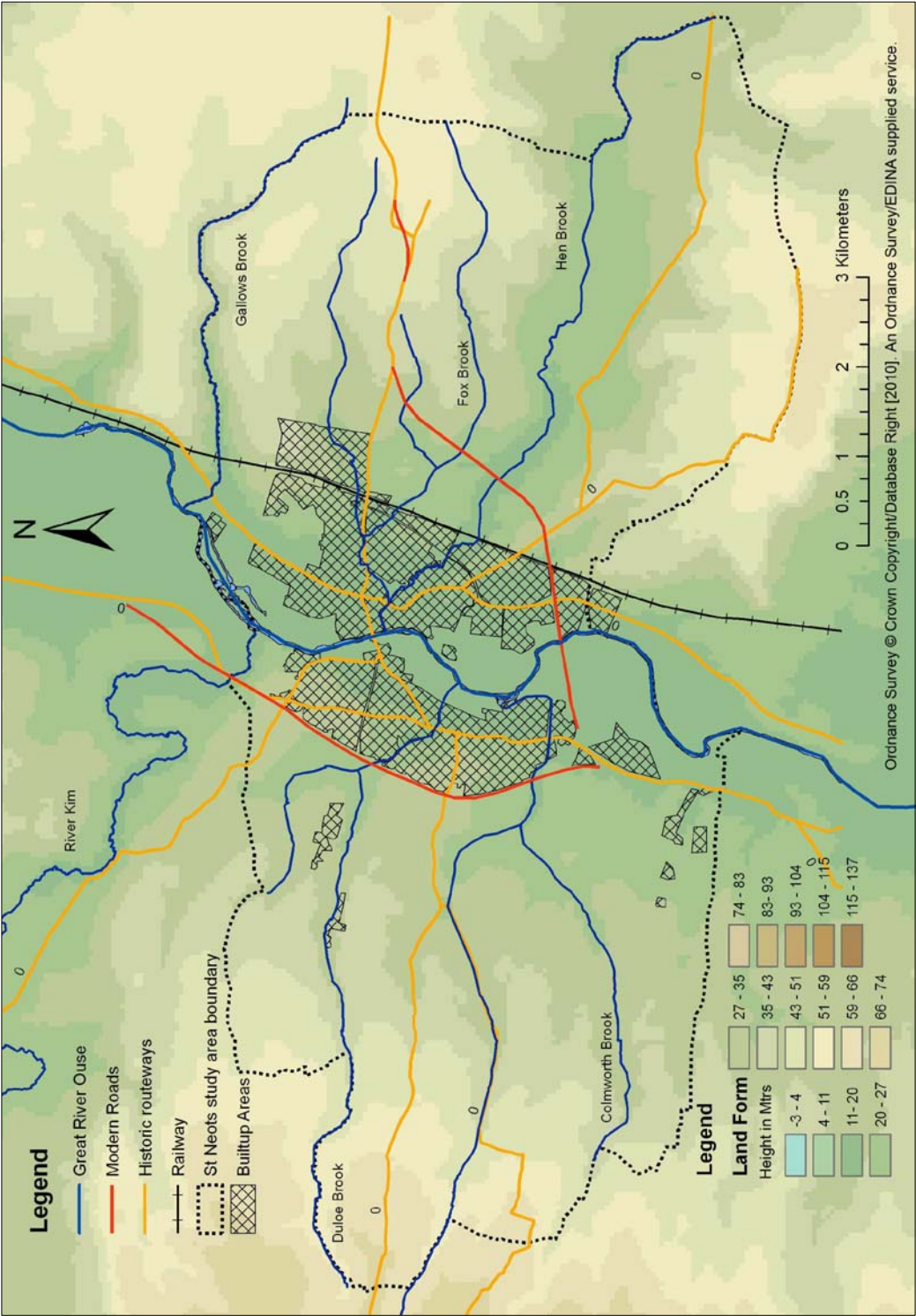
St Neots' Topography

St Neots lies within the valley of the River Great Ouse and the valley floor at this point is flat and open. It is approximately 1500 metres wide and liable to flooding, particularly on the eastern side where the land rises less steeply than on the west. The valley bottom is about 14 metres above Ordnance Datum (AOD) with the land on each side rising to 30 metres. The highest point is at Duloe Hill on the west, which stands at 33 metres. The underlying geology is Oxford Clay overlaid with Boulder Clay and the river has deposited gravel beds and river alluvium in the valley floor. This contains gravels with terraces on either side (first and second terraces to the east and second terrace on the west). These gravels are rich in archaeological remains associated in particular with early human habitation, of which there is significant Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Iron Age material (Cambridgeshire County Council 2002, 15 & 16). See Plan 5.8

⁹ St Neots population growth is hard to determine because population sizes of its component settlements were often recorded in combination with other settlements not within the area of the modern town.

¹⁰ An exception is Huntingdon, which now includes the neighbouring village of Hartford.

Plan 5.8 St Neots' Topography



Rivers and Routeways

A series of brooks on the east side of the Ouse flow from the clay uplands over undulating terrain where these streams have created shallow valleys with low intervening ridges. The roads and trackways leading from the east follow the higher ground between these valleys. Gallows Brook forms the parish boundary to the north, and Hen Brook became the boundary between Eynesbury Parish and St Neots when the latter was formerly established in 1204. It is clearly the case that the lay of the land here directs the roads to a crossing point on the river in the vicinity of present day St Neots and a river crossing was established here from early times. Its current location is just north of the confluence of the Hen Brook with the Ouse. The Ouse has historically been a conduit for human communication (Lewis et al 1997, 45), although its effectiveness as a navigable waterway has varied considerably from age to age and its modern navigation was not completed until the seventeenth century (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 338). The pattern of roads and track ways is quite distinctive with roadways following the course of the river on both its banks on the higher land away from the floodplain, and these were likely all-weather roads. The road on the western bank became the Great North Road, passing through Eaton Socon. Part of the eastern roadway eventually formed one of the alternative stretches of the Great North Road, south of St Neots. Both routes may have had their origins in ancient track ways linked by laterals passing over the river at St Neots/ Eaton Ford (Woodcock 1949-51, 237-244). There is a Romanised trackway following the course of the river at a distance of about four kilometres to the east, but the exact alignment and relationship of the Roman roads in this area is not always clear and will be considered further in Chapter 7.

Origins of the Modern Town

The focus of the modern town and its component historical settlements is an ancient river crossing with the medieval settlement of St Neots on the east bank. Its origins lie in a Saxon monastic house founded by Earl Alric about 974 (Gorham 1824, 48; Jamison 1974, 339). The Saxon monastery was founded on lands within the parish of Eynesbury, an older settlement also on the east side of the river. On the western bridgehead was the hamlet of Eaton Ford, historically part of the parish of Eaton Socon. The village of Eaton Socon itself lies a little to the south on the west bank of the Ouse.

Development of the built environment was slow between 1890 and 1950 but there was a very rapid expansion post 1950. Earlier development tended to be piecemeal and generally occurred within existing curtilage boundaries (frequently within post-enclosure field boundaries). By contrast, later development tends to be far more systematic (although small scale infill development is not unknown) and has involved the clearing of relatively large areas ahead of planned development. This has imposed a new morphology with little relationship to the superseded curtilage boundaries or local vernacular styles.

Local Economy

All of the previously individual settlements that now form the St Neots conurbation were originally (and up until modern times) largely agricultural. Early directories for St Neots, Eaton Socon, Eynesbury and surrounding areas confirm this¹¹. The St Neots official guide of 1910 gives a

¹¹ The earliest mainly recorded those working in the professions, trade, and commerce: for example, Bailey's British Directory, 1794; The Universal British Directory, vol. iv, 1794; Pigot & Co. Commercial Directory, 1823/4. By the time of Slater's Directory in 1851 the gentry, clergy and farmers were also been included.

similar picture of the town and Kelly's Directory of 1940 (the last essentially pre-war account) confirms this view, as does the official guide of 1951. In all of these sources the economy is presented as predominantly an agricultural one with its supporting service industries. However, the post 1950's developments (centred as they have been on taking overspill population from London) have provided new employment opportunities in the non-agricultural sector and accommodation for people working in the newly developed industrial developments that have sprung up contemporaneously. The reasons and ramifications for this trend nationally have been examined in some detail in Chapter 2, and the result has been to shift the economy from one based on agriculture to one in which most residents are either engaged in other sectors of the economy or work out of the area.

The Formation of St Neots into an Urban District

The creation during the latter part of the nineteenth century of multi-functional local authorities rationalised previous attempts to form local services that were more accountable in an increasingly regulated, urbanised and industrialised society. For example, the creation of Poor Law Unions and Sanitary Districts earlier in the century was the precursor to a new system of local control over local services, which also reflected the growing interest in a local and more inclusive democracy. This culminated in a major overhaul of local government in 1894/5 during which St Neots became the focus for a new Urban District Council. The predecessor parishes of St Neots and Eynesbury were dismembered with part of their territory going to the newly created St Neots Urban District and the remainder becoming St Neots Rural Civil Parish and Eynesbury Hardwick Civil Parish. Eaton Socon Civil Parish (in Bedfordshire) was abolished in

1965 — part going to an enlarged St Neots Urban District Council in the newly formed county of Huntingdonshire and Peterborough, part to Roxton Civil Parish, and the rest forming a new civil parish based on Staploe¹². The subsequent local government reorganisation in 1972-74 made Huntingdonshire into a district of the County of Cambridgeshire and St Neots became a Town Council within that District¹³. As further expansion has taken place to the urban environment of St Neots, further encroachments into the surrounding rural parishes has occurred. This process is not only expanding the boundaries of the town itself, but causing the re-organisation of the rural parishes too (Huntingdonshire District Council 2008, Appendix G; HDC 2010). Complex as this might seem, these developments were only the latest in a long series of changes and the earlier histories of these ancient parishes were hardly less complicated. This theme is further explored in Chapter 6.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EASTERN HIGH WEALD

The High Weald is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which affects the way that development is determined and managed within the contemporary planning regime. In practice this has often encouraged historic research as local planning authorities commission work specifically designed to underpin and inform policy decisions. Consequently, the early history of the Weald has had a strong influence on how the current settlement pattern of the High Weald is perceived today, and the character of permitted development.

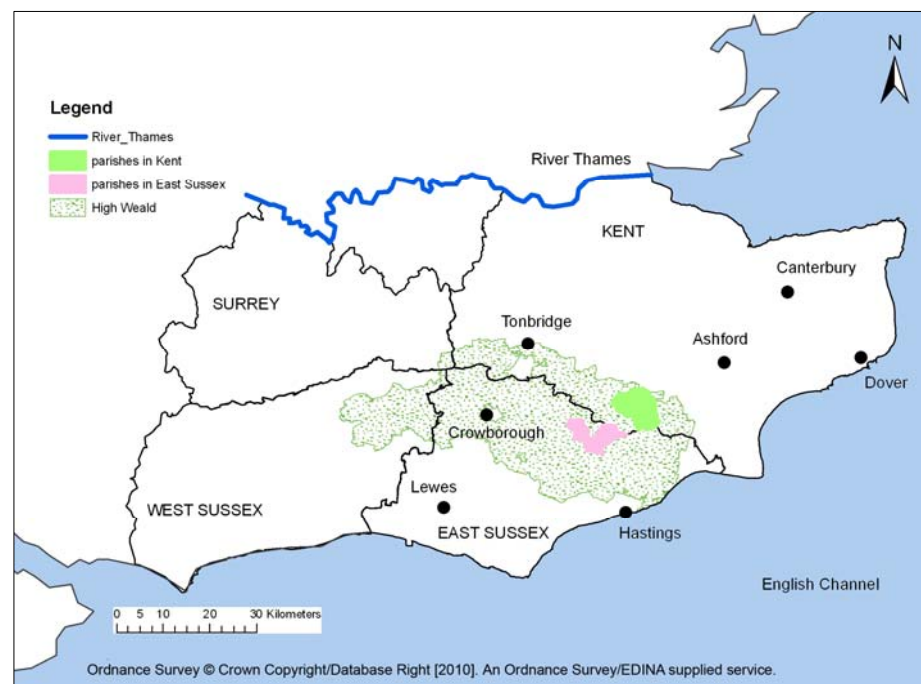
¹² Eaton Socon lost 539 acres, with a population in 1961 of 2,373 to St Neots, 352 acres, pop. 1961 of 511 to Roxton; the remaining 2186 acres, pop. 1961 of 380, formed the new parish of Staploe (Young 1979, 630).

¹³ Local Government reorganisation Huntingdonshire, 1972 (Young 1979, 630).

The High Weald, an Area within the Southeast Region

The Southeast of England has a very specific geological and topographic unity, but one that also engenders considerable variety. Geographically this region is a virtual peninsula lying between the Thames Estuary to the north and the English Channel in the south, which extends from the North Foreland of Kent in the east to just west of Petersfield in Hampshire. The Weald is situated within this geographical/geological region and the High Weald, a topographic area of higher relief composed of mixed sandstones and clays, lays partly in Kent, partly in Surrey and partly in the modern counties of East and West Sussex. Plan 5.9

Plan 5.9 Geographical Location of the High Weald showing the position of the six parishes



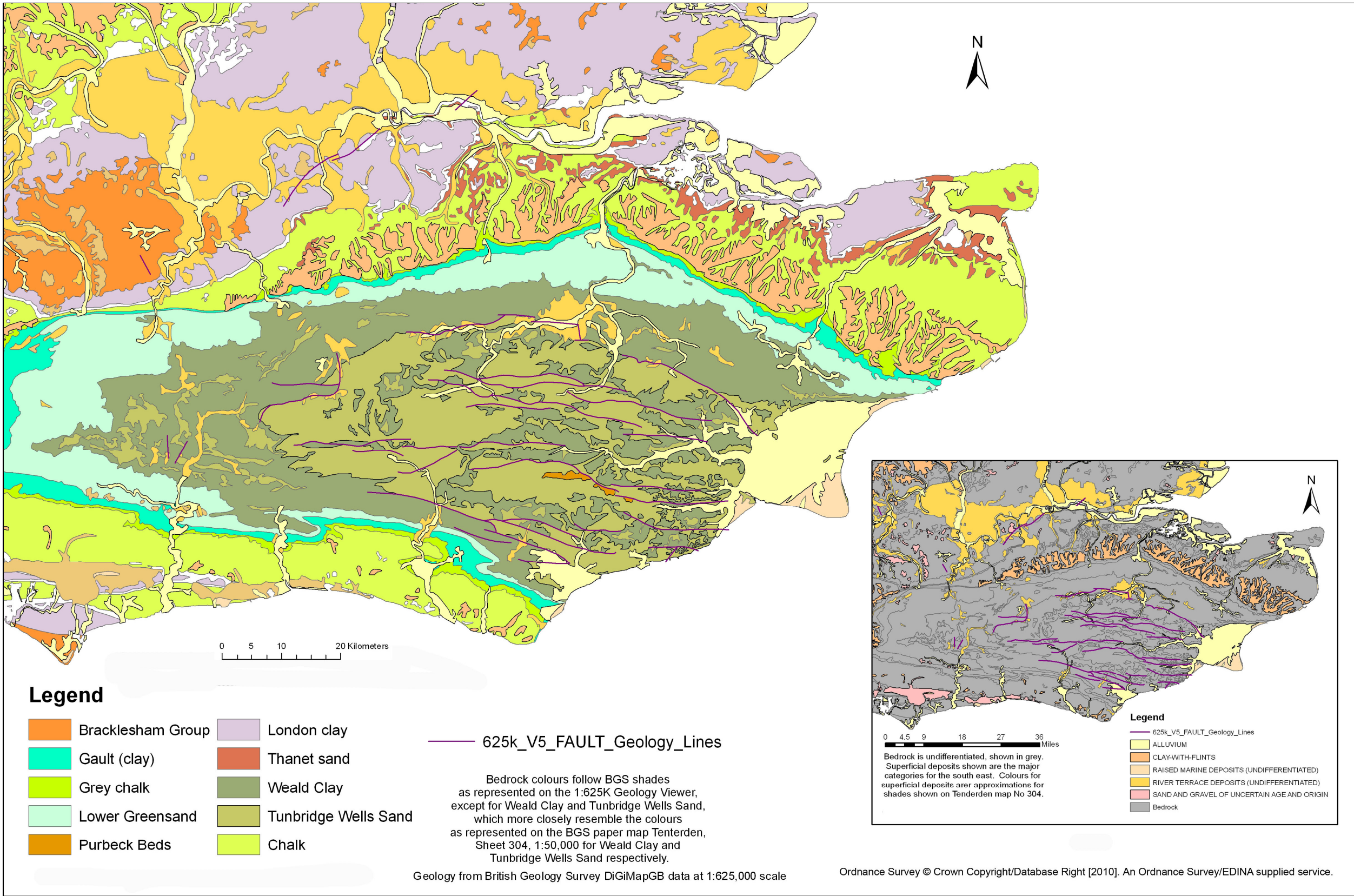
Geologically, the Weald is part of an eroded anticlinal system that covers most of the territory of the Southeast Region. Geologists refer to the whole of this area as the ‘Wealden District’ in recognition of its geological unity (Edmunds 1960, 1; Wooldridge & Goldring 1966, 2). However, topographically and historically the area known as the ‘Weald’ refers to that

part of this eroded anticline between the scarps of the North and South Downs (Witney 1976, 5-7; Everitt 1986, 44-45). The topographical Weald is divided into the Low Weald (mainly a low lying area of heavy clays) and the High Weald, a complex upland area of mixed sandstones and clays making up the Hastings Beds, part of the Wealden Series of the Lower Cretaceous (Shepard-Thorn et al 1966, 24). See Plans 5.10a and 10b.

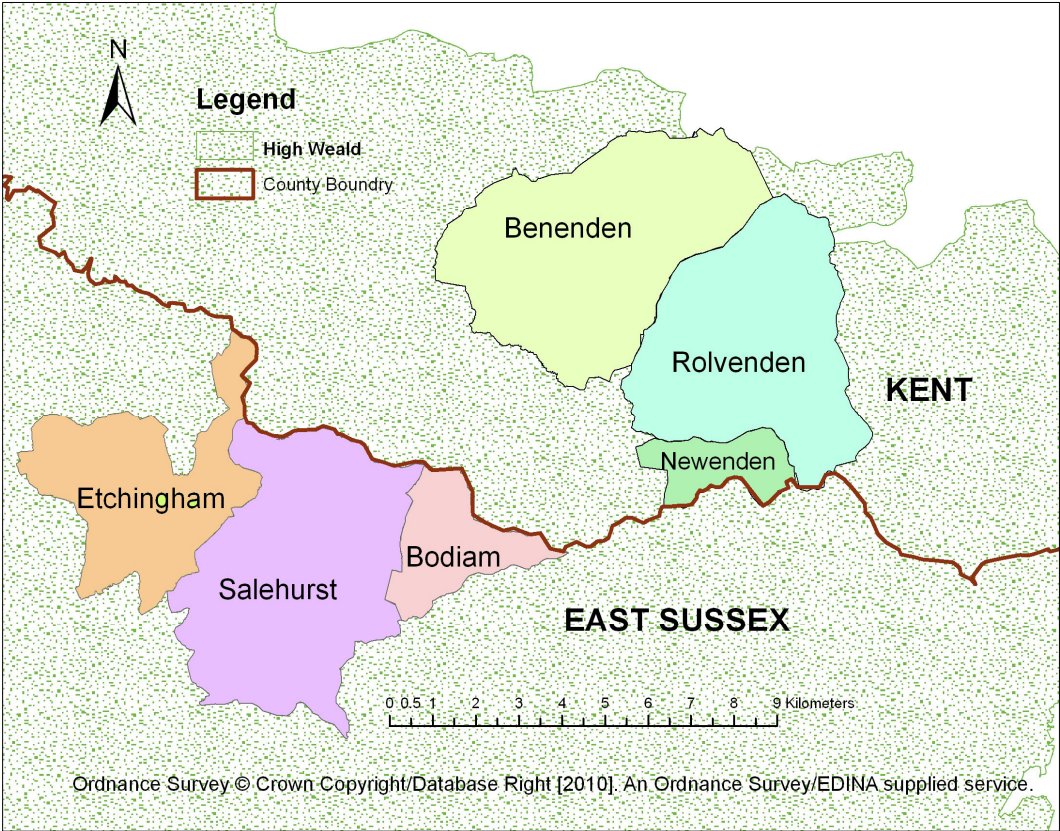
The High Weald is complex, both in terms of its natural history and its pattern of settlement. The study area lies on the borders of Kent and East Sussex and is comprised of two sets of three parishes each, one set on the Kent side and the other in East Sussex. Plan 5.11

Each cluster of parishes has been chosen using a set of criteria by which an equal number of parishes with a similar range of sizes by acres, and with comparable topographical configuration are selected. All of the parishes chosen are in the catchment area of the Rother (although the watershed between the Rother and the Medway lies within the northern part of one of the parishes [Shephard et al 1966, figure 2]). Within Kent the parishes chosen are Newenden (1,044 acres), Rolvenden (5,622 acres) and Benenden (6,555 acres). In Sussex the parishes chosen are a cluster composed of Bodiam (1,597 acres), Etchingham (3,751 acres), and Salehurst (6,481 acres). Each of the groups of parishes has access to the Rother and, up until early modern times, had access through small inland wharves to the sea.

Plan 5.10a and 10b Geology of the South East



Plan 5.11 Location of the Six Study Parishes in the High Weald



Topology of the Eastern High Weald

The topography of the Eastern High Weald is a landscape created by the erosion of the central core of the Wealden anticline into a series of valleys and intervening ridges (Wooldridge & Goldring 1966, 88). This deeply eroded landscape gives way on the eastern edge of the study area to the wetlands around the lower reaches of the Rother and its tributaries, which have formed broad valleys liable to inundation in the winter months (Eddison 2000, 102 & plate 24, figure 50). The Rother flows eastwards through East Sussex, until it forms the county boundary with Kent at about the point that it disgorges into the territory commonly referred to (although not completely accurately) as Romney Marsh. Henceforth it now flows southwards to the English Channel at Rye (although in the past it has taken other courses over the marsh lands [Eddison 2000, 105-107]). The hills of the Eastern High Weald are highest to the west, but within the study area rarely rise above one hundred metres. The valleys are frequently steep sided and the streams that cause them many, which generally increases the feeling of height to the ridges that mark the interfluves. Plan 5.12 and Plate 5.2.

Geology

The geological formations of the eastern High Weald have been eroded by the sea prior to the mid-Holocene (approximately 6,000-3,000 cal. Yr BP) and thereby have given the district direct access to the English Channel (Long et al 1998, 45-63). See Plan 5.9. In the area of the target parishes the local bedrock consists of Tunbridge Wells Sand overlaying Wadhurst Clay over Ashdown Beds, with superficial deposits of river and marine alluvium in the valley bottoms. It would be expected, therefore, that within such a heavily dissected landscape the sequence would result in Tunbridge Wells Sand on the hilltops, Wadhurst Clay on the valley sides

and Ashdown sands in the valley floors. This sequence does regularly occur, but as these beds are heavily folded and faulted all three lithologies can outcrop in complex juxtapositions (this is particularly evident along the Benenden anticline, where a fault line has thrown up Ashdown beds alongside Tunbridge Wells Sand) [Shepard-Thorn et al 1966, 12-77]. The result of this complex geology is that the area occupied by the six parishes presents the opportunity for a variety of soil and drainage conditions, and therefore farming opportunities. Plan 5.13a and 13b.

Soils and Land Use

Soils within the High Weald are extremely varied and soil types are widely dispersed. Soil composition is strongly influenced by the geology of the area and, broadly, soil types correspond with the outcrops of the main geological strata. The soils of the valley sides formed over Wadhurst Clay are predominantly clayey, slowly permeable, moisture retentive soils with impeded drainage and seasonal surface wetness. Those overlying either Ashdown Beds (frequently in the gently sloping valley bottoms) or Tunbridge Wells Sands (usually on the gently rounded hill tops) are silty with dense, slowly permeable subsoils, the slightly impeded drainage causing seasonal surface wetness. In the valley bottoms where the soil is clayey or silty alluvium (locally associated with peaty soils in basins) they are seasonally, or permanently, affected by high groundwater (with slow or variable permeability) and locally with short-term flooding in some years. In actuality, the soils come in complex and often unpredictable arrangements, with several soil series commonly present in the same field. Thick drifts greatly diversify soil type in most districts. Many occurrences of different soils are too small to be recorded on current maps. Plan 5.14

The great variety of soils favours mixed farming, although currently pasture predominates outside those areas where the terrain is flat enough to allow modern arable management to work efficiently. Needs change over time, but in the past dairying, sheep and raising beef cattle have been important. Cereals have been widely grown, and fruit and hop growing have all found favour. Some of the poorer soil over outcrops of Tunbridge Wells Sand has traditionally been given over to forestry or parkland (Shepard-Thorn et al 1966, 105).

Climate

The rainfall in this area at c. 825mm is high for the region, with the wettest month being November (thus early ploughing is usually essential). The steeply sloping ground provides a degree of natural drainage, but even so the soil moisture deficit in August is low at c. 80mm; thus summer irrigation needs are low. Return to field capacity is rapid once the autumn rains arrive, and indeed the excess winter rainfall is high for the region at an average of 300mm. Summer temperatures are generally higher, and winter temperatures lower than for the Southeast as a whole. There is a danger of high winds on exposed easterly slopes and although frost liability is generally low, it is higher within the steeper valleys. Generally speaking the growing season starts early, usually between 5th-15th March (compared with the North Downs, for example, which can be as late as 4th April). The Rother Levels growing season commonly begins earlier than the 5th March (Fordham & Green 1980).

Plan 5.12 Topology of the Six Wealden Parishes

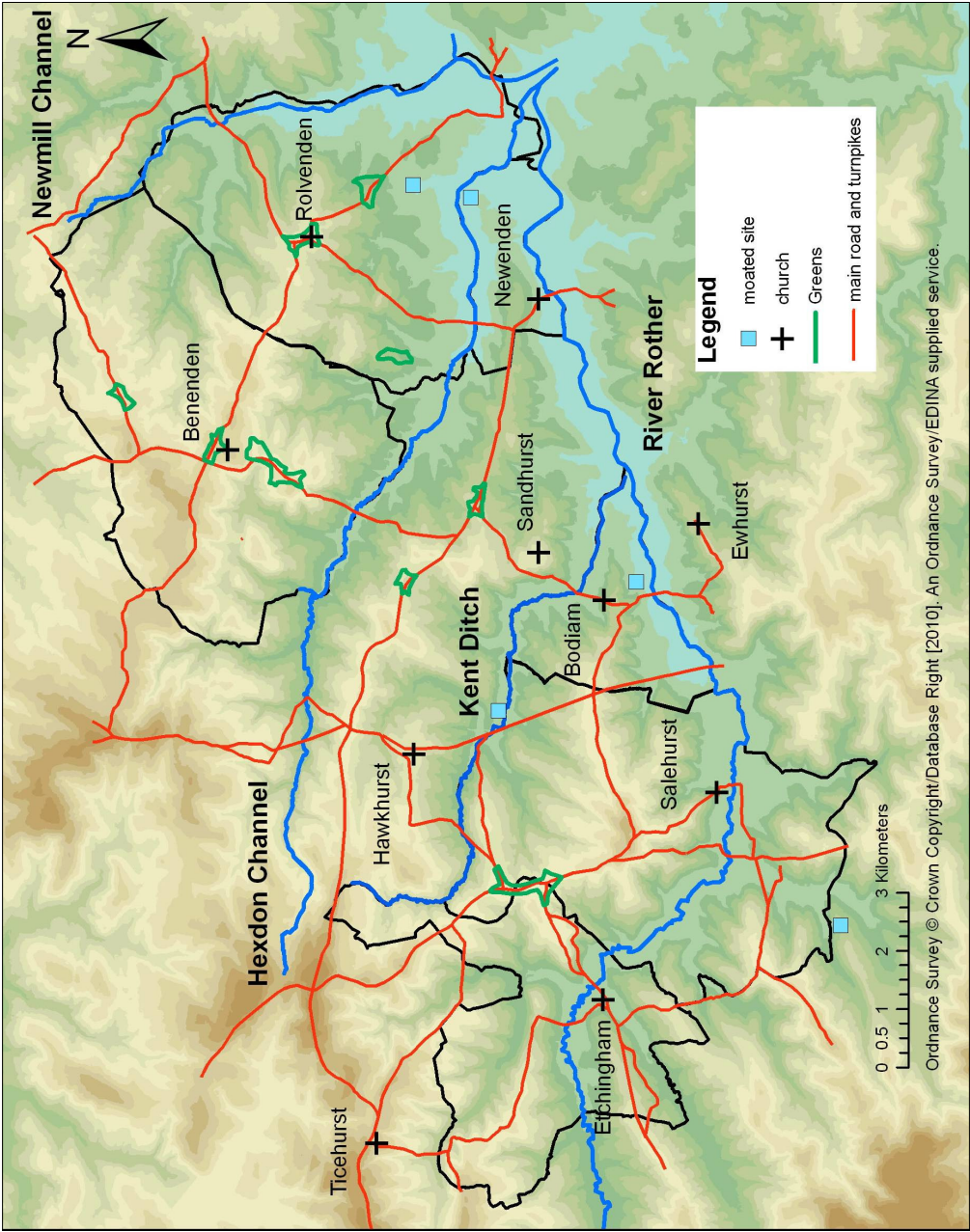


Plate 5. 2 High Weald Today



View from Benenden Dingle: close-grained countryside enhancing the impression of woodland



Bodiam: more open-grained countryside with farmsteads more visible in the landscape



Rawlinson Ghyll showing coppice stools



A sunken lane near St Peter's Green, Bodiam



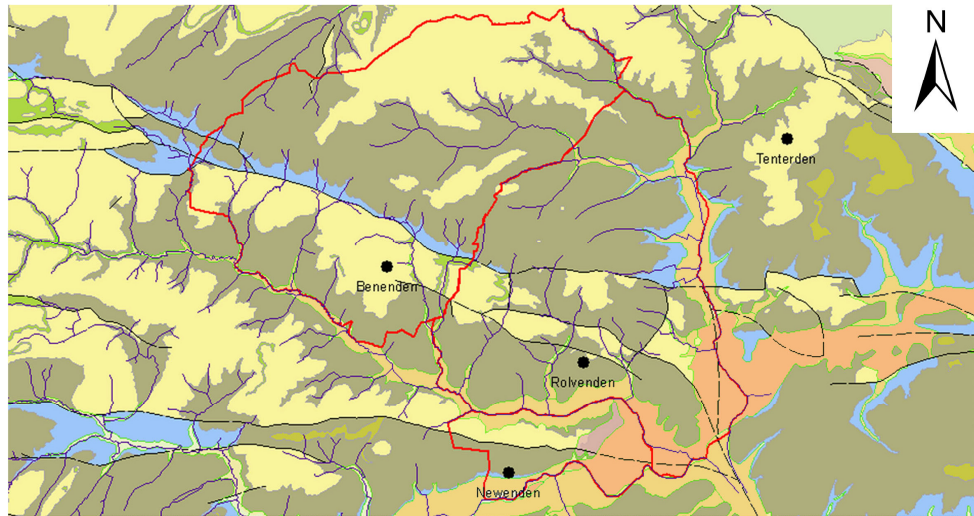
Hexdon Channel, Rolvenden



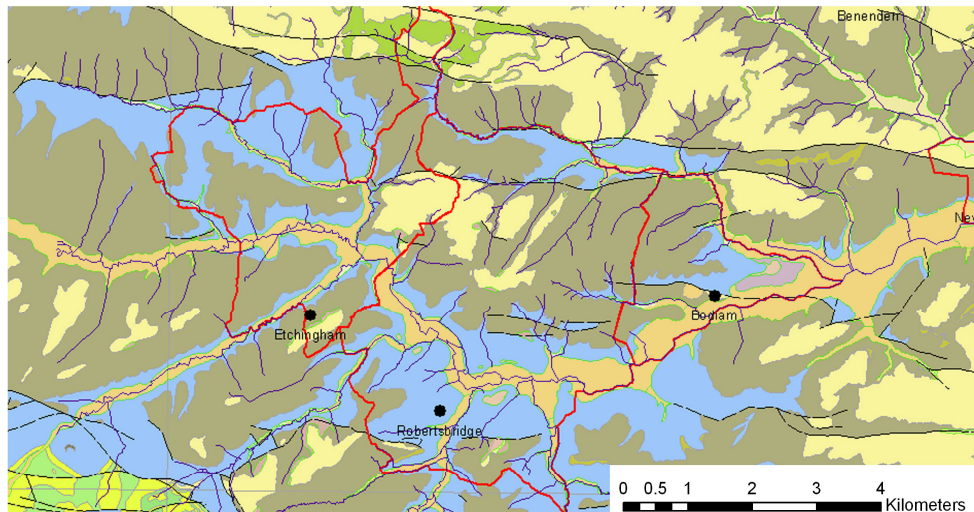
View north from Castle Toll, Newenden, across the Hexdon channel to Rolvenden

Plan 5.13a and 13b Geology of the Wealden Parishes

Kent Parishes: Benenden, Newenden and Rolvenden



East Sussex Parishes: Bodiam, Etchingham and Salehurst



Legend

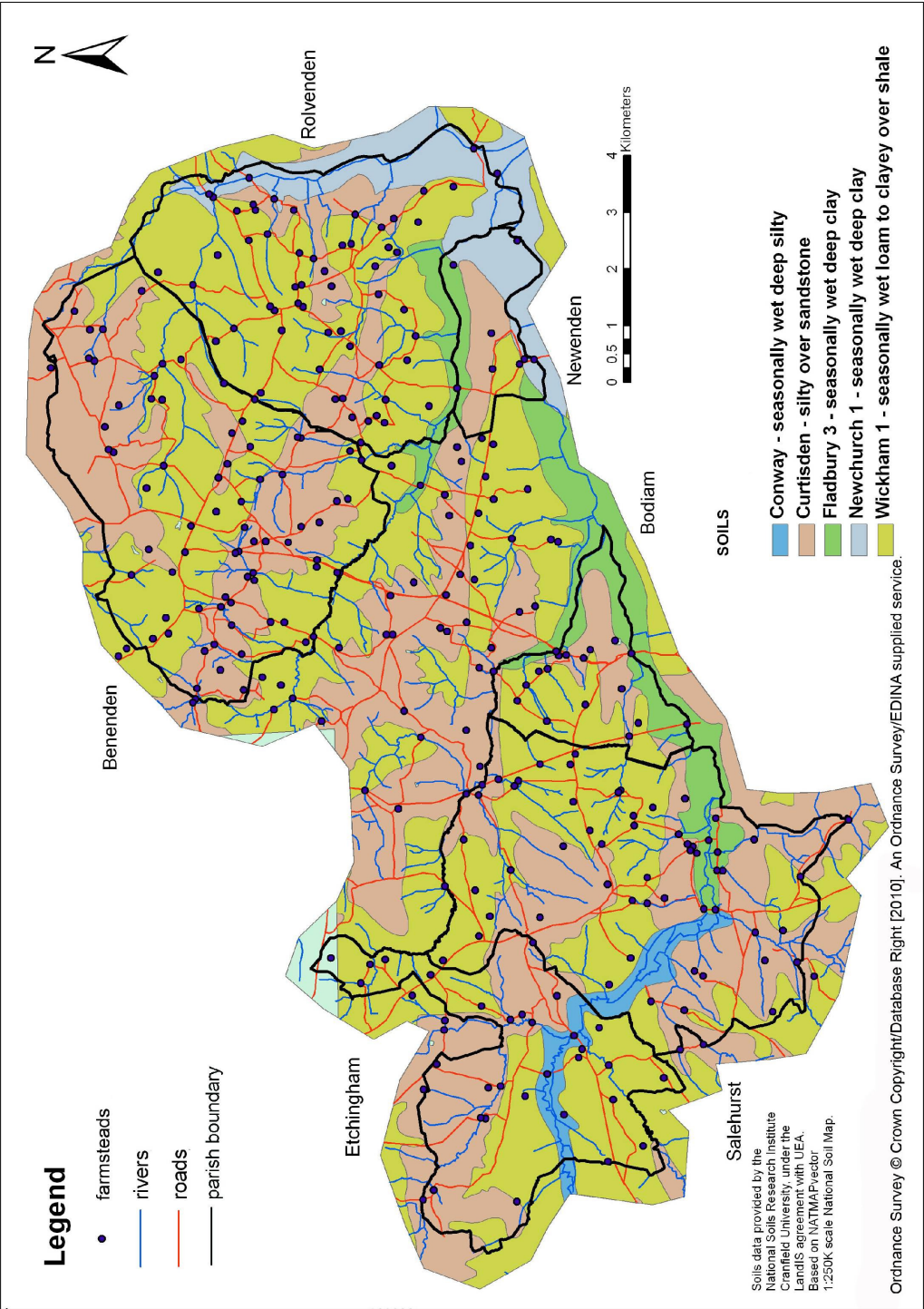
River Alluvium	clay in Tunbridge Wells sand
Marine Alluvium	Tunbridge Wells sand
Wadhurst clay	Ashdown beds
Head	

parish boundaries
Rivers
fault lines

Data derived from British Geological Survey 1:50,000 viewed via a WMS link, and coloured to match map sheet 304 for Tenderden (1:50,000)

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Plan 5.14 Soil Types in the Six Wealden parishes



Settlement Patterns

Habitation in the High Weald is very dispersed in nature, and farmsteads have in the past been the predominant habitative type, whether set apart within their own fields or in small clusters around small greens. Many of these greens were shown on the tithe maps as small hamlets and some of the older hamlets have expanded to village-like proportions within the last fifty years. However, there are still many individual farmsteads and scattered, often quite isolated, dwellings. There is a strong vernacular building style in the Weald, with many dwellings having tile-hung or wooden facades. The principal routes tend to follow the tops of the ridges, with many narrow secondary lanes linking the various homesteads, which are often in the valleys. The fields are small, although many have been amalgamated in recent years to accommodate modern farming requirements — but not to such a degree as elsewhere (for example, as in parts of Huntingdonshire). The area is well-wooded, partly native deciduous woodland, but with some extensive areas of largely coniferous woodlands, planted as part of the national programme during the twentieth century. The word ‘weald’ itself originally meant a wooded district, and references to the Weald, Andresweald or Andresleage in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle expressly also use the term *wudu*, or wood in connection with it (Gelling & Cole 2000, 253 and 257)¹⁴. The fact that the High Weald is still experienced as a wooded area is important, and further consideration needs to be given to what this means.

¹⁴ More recently it has been suggested that the term *weald* may have conveyed a wider meaning than just *woodland*, describing an area of uncultivated wood-pasture, but where wild honey and other natural products could be collected (Vera 2000, 109).

Disposition of Woodlands

The fact that the landscape of the High Weald is a heavily wooded one now, and was so in the past, is not in dispute; however, the nature and distribution of woodland over time is uncertain. Today, the deeply incised valleys (called ‘ghylls’ or ‘gills’) of the many tributary streams are mostly wooded (often old coppices), and there are also a number of ancient woodlands on the higher slopes. There are also small fields with multi-species hedges, containing mature trees and narrow strips of woodland called ‘shaws’. Within the hilly Wealden landform the combined effect of these features can produce the impression that the woodland is nearly continuous¹⁵. The nature and distribution of woodland, therefore is an important factor in the visual character of the High Weald. The impact of the distribution and type of woodland on settlement morphology and how the landscape is experienced are important issues, which will be examined in further detail in Chapter 12.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has introduced the analysis of the historic environment in two specific study areas, with an overview of their main features and attributes. The purpose of the field studies is to provide an analysis of historical settlement morphology leading to a narrative of their historical

¹⁵ From an historical perspective, the question is whether the distribution of woodland has always been as it is now? This is a difficult question to answer because there is a genuine lack of information prior to the Early Modern Period, by which time the distribution of woodland appears from sources such as map evidence to be recognisably modern. Domesday indicates that the Weald was heavily wooded in the eleventh century, but can do so only indirectly because of the way that it recorded land holdings (Rackham 2003, 125). It seems from Domesday that there were differences in the amount of woodland between Kent and Sussex, with Sussex having less recorded (Brandon 2003, 73-74) - although East Sussex is now the most heavily wooded county in England (Gardiner 1990, 33). However, there is no way to know in any detail from this how the woods were distributed, nor really what form they took, as neither is recorded. Woodland was still being cleared in many parts of the Weald in the thirteenth century, which supports the notion that there was more at the time of Domesday, but the record is partial (Brandon 2003, 91-96).

environment. The approach of the field study for both areas fulfils two requirements of the general methodology advocated in the previous chapter. First, the construction of a detailed analysis for specific locations, and secondly the opportunity to demonstrate the interconnectivity of locations — in other words, a demonstration that the analysis can inform local planning decisions as well as the more strategic ones. Finally, each of the chapters that deal with aspects of the research follow a similar structure: a brief introduction, an extended narrative dealing with the findings of the research topic, followed with a short commentary on the outcomes.

Part Three, Section 1:
THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE OUSE VALLEY

CHAPTER 6: PARISH FORMATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN THE OUSE VALLEY

*“I have hidden something in the inner chamber
And sealed the lid of the sarcophagus
And levered a granite boulder against the door
And the debris has covered it so perfectly
That though you walk over it daily you never suspect.”¹*

¹ from 'Monologue in the Valley of the Kings', by Anthony Thwaite, (1997), *Selected Poems*.

INTRODUCTION

The organization of the contemporary settlement pattern of the Ouse Valley that we enjoy today is essentially post-Roman, has a structure elaborated from the tenth century, with the distribution of settlement being recognisably modern by the thirteenth. There are elements of the landscape along the Ouse valley, which arguably relate to earlier habitation features. Some of these are Roman (the morphology of Godmanchester bears that out); others are older, perhaps even surviving from before the Iron Age (see the discussion of the Rowley Hedge boundary in Chapter 9).

The choice of parishes as the principal unit of analysis requires an exploration of their origins and relationship to the settlement pattern. The parishes provide the framework for the examination of settlement form in the next chapter, as well as the basis for identifying the historic continuity between successive phases of settlement development. Parish formation, it is suggested, is one element (albeit a seminal one) in the evolution of settlement morphology and individual parishes need to be viewed within a wider context.

A key period for the establishment and consolidation of the pattern of settlement discernable in today's landscape was the years following the Norman Conquest until about the end of the twelfth century. By the time of Domesday, in the eleventh century, settlement was similar in its form and distribution to the thirteenth century, but incomplete. During the course of the twelfth century, a period of economic expansion and social change, something happened that modified rural settlement in the Ouse Valley — as it did elsewhere in England. There were many possible reasons: for example, the development of the manor and lordship, changes in tenurial relationships, the creation of new townships, population growth, and a

more benign climate. Within this process the development of parish communities seems particularly important. However, the historic formation of parishes and settlements is not just of academic interest. The relationship between different communities, as well as the dynamics of the twelfth century settlement development, is still reflected in how present day communities experience these places.

THE NARRATIVE

There is a direct relationship between settlements, the landscape of which they are part, and the parish as an ecclesiastical or administrative unit — which also provides a socio-economic structure for the communities that inhabit it. This narrative explores aspects of this relationship in the context of parish formation.

Settlement and Parish Formation

Parish formation nationally is difficult to determine with any certainty. Morris has aptly described the process as “mushrooms in the night?” and has suggested that possibly three quarters of all local churches were in place before the end of the eleventh century — but with no absolute certainty (Morris 1989, 147). The Domesday survey of 1086 frequently records the existence of churches and, therefore, ought to provide an indication of the provision of church buildings towards the end of the eleventh century, but in many places there are obvious omissions. Morris has thrown useful light on the level of recording found in Domesday and has shown how the completeness of the record of church buildings varies considerably in different parts of the country and in different shires (Morris 1989, 141-142). For the area of the Ouse Valley included in the study the Domesday tally of parish churches was found to be 76% of those churches

documented by the end of the twelfth and the early years of the thirteenth centuries, whilst the percentage of churches recorded in the whole of Huntingdonshire was 67% (Morris 1989, 141). Morris makes the point that in contrast other counties were clearly under-recorded so that, for example, Bedfordshire records only four churches (of which Eaton Socon was not one), a figure that he shows from other records was impossibly small (Morris 1989, 141). Blair has demonstrated some of the regional differences (Blair 1987, 276), following Galbraith, who established that the level of recording of churches in Domesday was due in part to the way that the Commissioners executed the task in the different circuits used for the conduct of the survey (Galbraith 1961²). In Kent, for example, where Domesday mentioned 186 churches and chapels other eleventh-century sources record in excess of 400 (Ward 1932, 39-59; 1933, 60-86). Thus the incidence of churches recorded in Domesday for the Ouse Valley in Huntingdon was high and compares well with the percentage of other well recorded counties such as Suffolk (75%). In fact, Domesday did not under-record in Huntingdonshire (Blair 2005, 413-419 & fig. 50).

Within the total geographical area of the present-day civil parishes in Huntingdonshire covered by this study, Domesday records fifteen vills or townships with churches — all bearing the names of modern day settlements. Plan 6.1 However, it is difficult to correspond the territory served by the Domesday churches to later ecclesiastical parishes, let alone modern civil parishes. The churches recorded in Domesday are at settlements without given boundaries that can be accurately located on modern maps (that is, they do not represent ‘parishes’ as we understand them). However, this does not prevent the recognition of the Domesday

² As quoted in Morris, p.141.

settlement pattern within that of the ecclesiastical parishes as they became established, which had occurred within a hundred and fifty years of Domesday. A few of these medieval parishes included subordinate settlements served by chapels, most of which later became civil parishes in their own right³.

Table 6.1 is representation of the relationship between Domesday villages with churches ascribed to them and later parochial structures. It shows the sixteen townships within the study area recorded by Domesday as having one or more churches⁴. After 1086 (when information becomes more abundant) it is possible to identify the location and geographical extent of these ecclesiastical parishes as they existed later in the Middle Ages. Plan 6.2

³ There is a possibility that a chapel at Weald may have existed in the eleventh century, but it did not survive the Middle Ages (Gorham 1824, 75 & 121). The Victoria County History has the chapel at Weald as a twelfth century foundation (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 280), although Gorham's evidence seems better.

⁴ The Bedfordshire Domesday did not record a church at Eaton Socon, although other evidence would suggest that Eaton Socon did have one by 1086. As Morris has pointed out, Bedfordshire certainly under recorded the incidence of churches and so an omission at Eaton is not proof that a church did not exist (Morris 1989, 141).

Plan 6.1 Domesday Churches along the River Great Ouse Valley, c. 1086

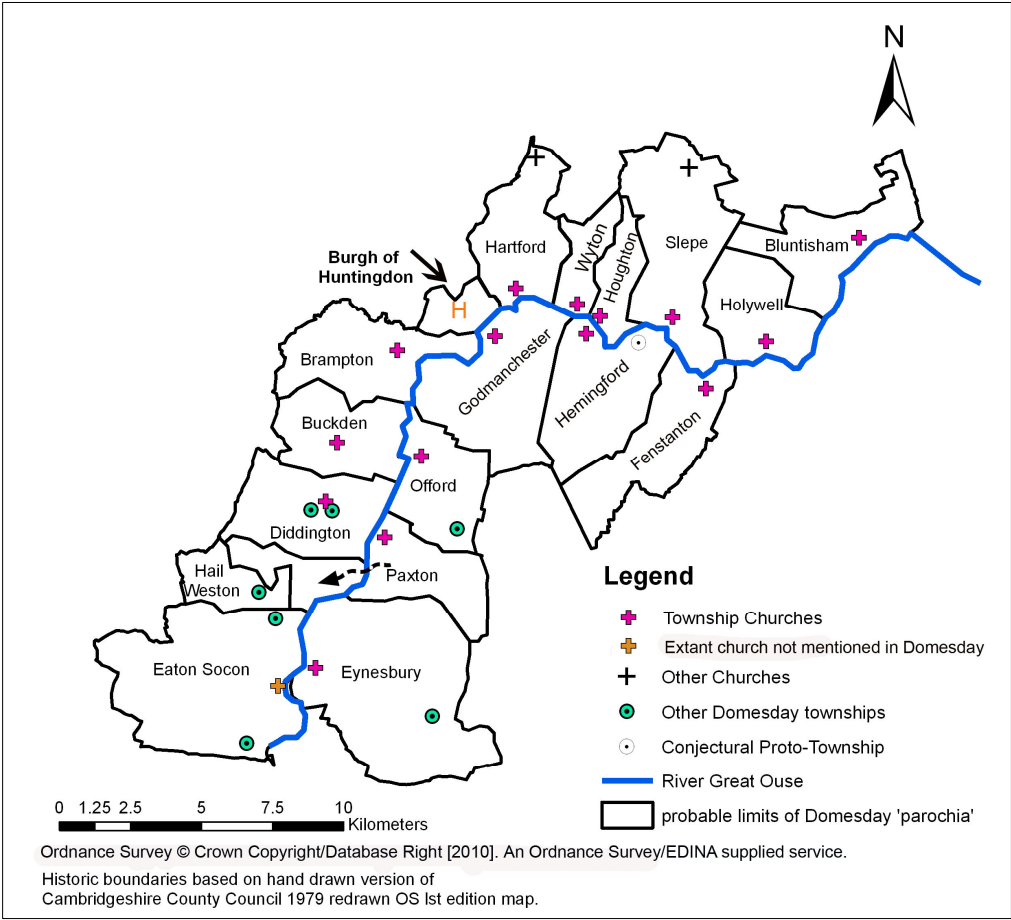
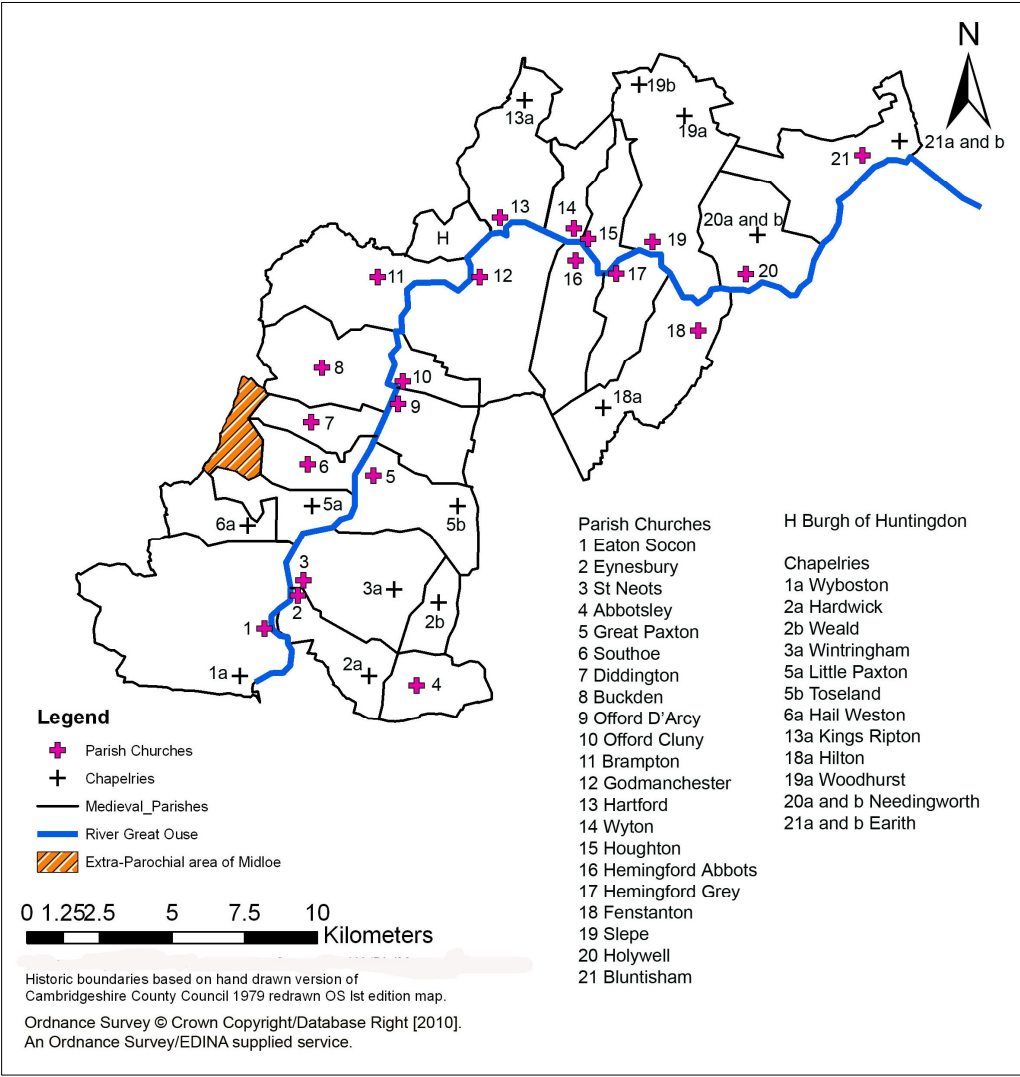


Table 6.1: showing Location of Domesday Churches in Relation to Later Parishes

DOMESDAY PLACES WITH CHURCHES (* = with Priest) § = No church recorded in Domesday	MEDIEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL PARISHES	MODERN CIVIL PARISHES [] = Not in Study Area. § = no church
*Eynesbury	Eynesbury St Neots (1204) Abbotsley (1138)	§Eynesbury Hardwick St Neots Town Council §St Neots Rural Abbotsley
§Eaton Socon	Eaton Socon	(Part To St Neots Town Council — See Above) §[Staploe] [Croxtan]
*Paxton (Includes Three Berewicks)	Great Paxton (Incl. Chapelries At Little Paxton, Toseland And Possible One Other)	Great Paxton Little Paxton Toseland
Diddington	Diddington Southoe	Diddington Southoe & Midloe
*Offord	Offord Cluny Offord Darcy	Offord Cluny Offord Darcy
*Buckden	Buckden	Buckden
*Brampton	Brampton	Brampton
*Godmanchester	Godmanchester	Godmanchester
*Hemingford	Hemingford Abbots Hemingford Grey	Hemingford Abbots Hemingford Grey
Fenstanton	Fenstanton (Chapelry At Hilton)	Fenstanton [Hilton]
*Bluntisham	Bluntisham Cum Earith	Bluntisham §Earith
*Holywell	Holywell Cum Needingworth	Holywell Cum Needingworth
*Slepe (Record For Two Churches)	Slepe (St Ives) (Includes Chapelries At Woodhurst & Old Hurst)	St Ives Town Council Woodhurst Oldhurst
Houghton *Wyton	Houghton Wyton	Houghton Cum Wyton
*Hartford (Record For Two Churches)	Hartford Cum Sapley (Includes Chapelry At Kings Ripton)	Huntingdon Town Council [Kings Ripton]

Plan 6.2 Medieval Ecclesiastical Parishes with Chapelries c. 1300



Of the twenty-one parishes⁵ established by the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, twelve of those mentioned as having had churches in 1086 probably served similar size parishes as in the thirteenth century. Three others (Eynesbury, Hemingford and Offord) had definitely become subdivided by about 1200 forming the *new* parishes of St Neots; Abbotsley; Offord Darcy (the original parish subsequently known as Offord Cluny); Hemingford Grey (the mother parish being Hemingford Abbots). A fourth, Diddington, may originally have contained Southoe, mentioned in Domesday as being without a church, but becoming a separate parish sometime during the twelfth century⁶.

In general, the areas covered by later medieval parishes are known even though their exact boundaries are difficult to establish with complete accuracy. However, the variables are sufficiently small that it is possible to compare the size of their areas once they became established with reasonable confidence. The average size of these parishes in the later Middle Ages was about 3,000 acres — the smallest being Offord Cluny, with just over 1,000 and the largest Eaton Socon with over 7,600 acres. Eight parishes were under 2,000 acres, but ten were over 3,000 acres: thus the range of sizes was surprisingly wide.

Extrapolating back to Domesday (assuming that the assumptions made above have validity) the average size of ‘parochial area’ in 1086 would have been nearly 4,000 acres. Only two parishes, Houghton and Wyton would have been less than 2,000 acres. A further three were possibly under 3,000 acres with a further six over 4,000 acres. For example, the church

⁵ This does not include Midloe, which although a civil parish post the Middle Ages, was originally extra parochial to Warden Abbey in Bedfordshire (Page et al [eds.] 1974, 318).

⁶ The topography, settlement pattern and the history of land tenure in the locality support this and these aspects are discussed further in Chapter 8.

recorded for Eynesbury in 1086 probably served an area of c. 7,700 acres before its sub-division in the twelfth century⁷. Eaton Socon (in Bedfordshire) retained its 7,600 acres until modern times and the neighbouring Huntingdonshire parish of Great Paxton was well over 4,000 acres, which during the Middle Ages included subordinate settlements served by chapelries. There were other instances of large Saxon parishes along the Huntingdonshire Ouse; for example, Slepe (the modern St Ives) at approximately 5,225 acres. Slepe, with its chapelries of Old Hurst and Woodhurst, like Great Paxton, survived through the Middle Ages as one parish. At Hartford, its Chapelry at Kings Ripton became a parish in its own right no later than the thirteenth century (Page et al 1974b, 210).

It is difficult to find a pattern here of parish divisions being related to acreage as such — for example, Eynesbury and Eaton Socon were the largest of the Domesday parishes, but only Eynesbury of the two became divided; whilst Offord, the third smallest parish was subject to division. There was a greater likelihood, however, that parishes where land resources at the time of Domesday were held by a number of powerful tenants would divide. The following review of the evidence suggests that powerful landowners who wanted to establish churches and create townships for their own manors often succeeded.

For example, of the three Domesday townships at which a church was recorded in 1086 and later divided into two or more parishes, Offord and Hemingford were similar in that at neither was there a single dominant landholder. In each of these townships the land tenure was as follows:

⁷ I have included Abbotsley into the Saxon parish of Eynesbury, although this has not been confirmed indisputably, but is most likely. Even without Abbotsley, Eynesbury would have been a large parish until its formal separation from St Neots in 1204 (Page et al 1974b, 337).

Table 6.2: Tenants and Size of Holding at Hemingford and Offord

HOLDERS OF LAND	OFFORD HIDAGE	HEMINGFORD HIDAGE
Ramsey Abbey	4	18
ditto		1
ditto		5
Arnulf de Hesding	10	
Eustace the Sheriff	3	4
Countess Judith	3	
Aubrey de Ver		11
Ralf, son of Osmond		1
TOTAL	20	40

At Offord, Arnulf de Hesding held the principal manor that he later granted to Cluny Abbey together with the advowson of the church, which suggests that the location of the Domesday church was therefore at Offord Cluny (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 319). At the Offords there is no indication within the Domesday entry that the process of separation into two parishes had yet begun in 1086. At Hemingford, the church in Domesday is listed under the manor later identified as Hemingford Abbots. This manor belonged to Ramsey Abbey which also held a further five hides elsewhere in Hemingford — “at the other Hemingford”, suggesting that some separation of settlement centres was already occurring (Maitland 1911, 92). The eleven hides held by Aubrey de Ver at Hemingford became the principal manor of the settlement later named as Hemingford Grey; but the creation of the new township must have been a collaborative effort between landholders. For example, the second church built in the territory of the Domesday ‘Hemingford’ (at what is now Hemingford Grey) was not in the gift of Aubrey de Ver but Eustace the Sheriff. Eustace gave the advowson of this church to Huntingdon Priory in the early part of the twelfth century, confirming the presence of more than one powerful baronial tenant within the new township (Page et al [eds] 1974b, 314).

What can be deduced is that the less exclusive the Domesday township was in terms of tenure, then the more likely it was to split into more than

one parish⁸. Offord and Hemingford with four landholders each (the highest recorded in this stretch of the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley) divided as explained above and it is likely that in the case of these two townships that they were already polyfocal; that is, contained more than one habitation cluster⁹.

Of the total of twenty-one Domesday townships in the study area, fifteen were either in the hands of a single tenant (or predominantly so) and all except three of these were present as ecclesiastical parishes by 1300¹⁰. Of the townships with multiple tenants, Southoe, Diddington and Eynesbury each had two major tenants, and in fact all had undergone some transformation in parochial arrangements before the end of the twelfth century. Southoe and Diddington, with Boughton, were three townships closely related geographically in an area in which the only church recorded in Domesday was at Diddington. Boughton was a very small place with only one hide and five villains recorded for it, held by Eustace the Sheriff — who was also the principal tenant at Southoe. During the course of the twelfth century a church was built at Southoe, and Boughton was physically split between the two resulting parishes. It is tempting to think that the church at

⁸ Within a hundred years of Domesday many of the Ouse Valley manors had changed hands and the tenorial relationships looked quite different. This was a complex process, not directly relevant to this study except that the erosion of the hegemony of the earlier Honours may have contributed to the process of parish formation, where this occurred.

⁹ The township in the study area with the greatest number of tenants was Wyboston in Bedfordshire, but this township remained part of both the ecclesiastical and civil parish of Eaton Socon until modern times (Morris et al [eds] 1975, 8,4; 21,2; 23,23; 24,24; 38,2; 55,4).

¹⁰ These three places mentioned in Domesday that did not survive as separate townships are as follows: Boughton (discussed under Diddington and Southoe, below); *Subberie* in the Barford Hundred of Bedfordshire no longer exists, but is usually associated with Sudbury Meadow in Eaton Socon (Morris et al (eds) 1975, 38,1); *Cotes*, recorded twice in Domesday, may refer to two places, possible remembered in Cotton Farm, Offord Darcy and/or Caldecotes, a hamlet (now farm) in Eynesbury Parish (Page et al [eds] 1974b, 340 & 351; Morris & Harvey (eds) 1977, 2,1; 20,5).

Diddington originally served all three places¹¹. Eynesbury suffered a quite extraordinary series of changes over the same period of time, for the reasons given in the section on St Neots, below.

Ten of the parishes in existence by the thirteenth century had chapelries within them to serve outlying communities; the mother churches in nine of these parishes were mentioned in Domesday (see below). With the exception of Kings Ripton, these chapelries remained ecclesiastically subordinate throughout the Middle Ages, even though their townships had separate field systems and would (much later) become civil parishes¹² — Table 6.3. Not all of these chapelries survived into modern times, although the buildings of the ones that do are often indistinguishable in scale to the churches of independent parishes. The existence of parishes with chapelries in Huntingdonshire is an interesting perspective on ecclesiastical organisation in this area. Huntingdonshire is not usually associated with this type of ecclesiastical arrangement, more typically found in areas of low population density, especially in the North of England (Morris 1989, 233). The continued survival of dependent chapelries through the rest of the Middle Ages in Huntingdonshire was largely because, after the twelfth century, the parish system became more or less fixed (Blair 2005, 508-509). A principal reason for this consolidation was that the parish community itself had emerged as an established social entity:

¹¹ Midloe (not mentioned in Domesday) lay to the west of Southoe and by the twelfth century was an extra parochial territory held by Warden Abbey. It later became a civil parish of 881 acres in its own right, until in the twentieth century when it was joined to Southoe. The manor at Midloe was associated with great Staughton during the Middle Ages, so it may have originally been linked ecclesiastically to that parish. However, it is possible that it was in fact served from Diddington church at the time of Domesday, which is both nearer and better related topographically (Page et al [eds] 1974b, 318-319).

¹² Some of these chapelries remained ecclesiastically dependent into the twentieth century — a situation masked by substantial church buildings and the existence of civil parishes in the same places. For example, Hail Weston, a chapelry to Southoe since at least 1222 (Page et al 1974b, 304).

It took only a few generations for the various arrangements and compromises which were hammered out during the late tenth and eleventh centuries to be a parish's immemorial custom. By 1200 the parish church had become — as it often remains — the main repository of its community's identity. However fluid in origin, the parish as it consolidated became the determinant of other forms of collective action through many centuries. (Blair 2005, 504)

A timely reminder that a parish is not only an administrative convenience, nor just a territorial unit, but it is also the means through which individuals, and indeed whole communities, experienced a social identity and mediated their relationships.

Supporting Evidence of Parish Formation from Church Fabric

Architectural evidence lends some support to the chronology of parish formation outlined above, although such evidence by its nature needs to be viewed warily. Gem has previously highlighted some of the difficulties in dating minor churches using an analysis of architectural style and other typological analysis; whilst recognising that this is often necessary where documentary and other historic or archaeological information does not exist (Gem 1888, 21-30). The value of considering this kind of evidence here is that it helps to flesh out our understanding of the chronology of parish formation in this crucial period when the basis of Huntingdonshire's settlement morphology was being laid down. The evidence has been collected chiefly from that supplied by the Cambridgeshire Heritage Environmental Record, supplemented by the Victoria County History and the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments in England (RCHME 1926). Table 6.3, below, presents a summary of the information analysed by medieval parish.

Table 6.3 Domesday Churches, Medieval Parishes and Architectural Construction Dates

DOMESDAY PLACES WITH CHURCHES	MEDIEVAL PARISHES § 12th to early 13th C foundations	DATES of EARLIEST STONEWORK & DEDICATION
EYNESBURY St. Mary	EYNESBUR Weald (Chapelry)	St. Mary – circa 1170/80 Dedication unknown – 12th C
	§Hardwick (Free Chapel)	St. Thomas the Martyr – pre 1222
	§ABBOTSLEY (by 1138)	St. Margaret – Chancel arch circa 1300/10
	§ST. NEOTS (1204)	St. Mary – early 13 C
	§Wintringham (Chapelry c. 1218)	Dedication unknown
[EATON SOCON – St. Mary] Church here not recorded in Bedfordshire Domesday, but archaeological evidence for a church exists	EATON SOCON Wyboston (Chapelry, pre 1476)	St. Mary – 14 C but with 12 C font St. Mary, St. James & St. Christopher
PAXTON Holy Trinity	GREAT PAXTON Toseland (Chapelry) Little Paxton (Chapelry)	Holy Trinity – circa 1170 (?) (Saxon Minster with central tower design) St. Mary (now St. Michael!) – mid 12 C St. James – late 12 C
DIDDINGTON St. Lawrence	DIDDINGTON	St. Lawrence – 13 C
	§SOUTHOE Hail Weston (Chapelry)	St. Leonard – 12 C St. Nicholas – mid 13 C
OFFORD All Saints	OFFORD CLUNY §OFFORD DARCY (by 1130)	All Saints – 13 C St. Peter – early to mid 12 C
BUCKDEN – St. Mary	BUCKDEN	St. Mary – 13 C
BRAMPTON – St. Mary	BRAMPTON	St. Mary – 12 C
GODMANCHESTER – St. Mary	GODMANCHESTER	St. Mary – 13 C, possible 11C reused stones?
HEMINGFORD St. Margaret	HEMINGFORD ABBOTS §HEMINGFORD GREY	St. Margaret – 12 C (central tower design) St. James – 12 C (central tower design)
FENSTANTON SS. Peter & Paul	FENSTANTON §Hilton (Chapelry)	SS Peter & Paul – 13 C, reuse of 12 C stones in tower St Mary Magdalene – 12 C
BLUNTISHAM St. Mary	BLUNTISHAM Earith (Chapelries)	St. Mary – 14 C St. James (Earith Fen) – date unknown St. Mary (armitage) – date unknown
HOLYWELL St. John the Baptist	HOLYWELL Needingworth (Chapelries)	St. John the Baptist – 13 C St. James (by 1252 but building not known) St. Mary (armitage) – dates not known
SLEPE All Saints (Record for two churches)	SLEPE (St. Ives) Woodhurst (Chapelry) §Oldhurst (Chapelry)	All Saints – 12 C All Hallows (later St. John the Baptist) – late 12 C St. Peter – 13 C, but piscine 12 C
HOUGHTON – St. Mary	HOUGHTON	St. Mary – 13 C
WYTON – St. Margaret & All Saints	WYTON	St. Margaret & All Saints – late 12 C
HARTFORD All Saints (Record for two churches)	HARTFORD Kings Ripton (Chapelry)	All Saints – 12 C St. Peter – early 13 C, but font 12 C

The starting point is fifteen churches recorded for townships in Domesday, plus the church at Eaton Socon, which although not mentioned in the Bedfordshire Domesday is known to have had a church contemporaneously through the archaeological record (CCC HER ref. no. 00374/A). Additionally there were two Domesday churches which have been identified as dependencies that in the later historic record appear as chapelries (see Table 6.1). Of this total of eighteen Domesday churches only one, Paxton, is definitely known to have been built of stone by 1086 (CCC HER 02476; Blair 2005, 356); additionally, there is evidence of re-used eleventh century stones at Godmanchester — an important Royal township (Page et al [eds] 1974b, 292). Paxton is a known Saxon minster and it is possible that Earl Waltheof rebuilt the present church before his fall from grace and execution in 1175 (Ralegh 1973, 120-140). It is known that a late Saxon church at Eaton Socon was made of timber (CCC HER ref. no. 00374/A), as was a possible one near the priory site at St Neots (CCC HER ref. 00551)¹³, but nothing further is known for certain about the construction of the other Domesday churches in the study area. The earliest fabric of Diddington, Offord, Buckden, Holywell, and Houghton is thirteenth-century (Page et al 1974b, 271,321,266,177,180), whilst Eaton Socon, Brampton, Hemingford, Slepe, Wyton and Hartford have good evidence of twelfth-century work (Page et al 1974c, 17; 1974b, 307, 220, 253, 173) — Fenstanton is principally thirteenth-century with the re-use of twelfth-century material in the tower (Page et al 1974b, 283). All of these churches, of course, have later work, but the point is that the Domesday

¹³ This church could have been contemporary with Domesday but, for the reasons given in the next section of the chapter, is unlikely to be the one recorded as being present at Eynesbury.

churches were being rebuilt and augmented in the two centuries following Domesday.

The *parochiae* of these Domesday churches developed into a more complex pattern of parishes and dependant chapelries post 1086 (see Plan 6.2). The large number of churches or chapels established between 1086 and the opening years of the thirteenth century nearly all have fabric datable to the time of their foundation, or soon afterwards (although Abbotsley is an exception with its earliest fabric dating from at least sixty years after its foundation as a parish [Page et al (eds.) 1974b, 258/9]). The rule seems to have been to construct in stone from at least the twelfth century; for example, there was a small stone church at Offord Darcy in 1130 (Page et al 1974b, 326), which would coincide with the separation of the parish from its mother church at Offord Cluny (rebuilt no later than the thirteenth century). At Hemingford, Ramsey Abbey continued to hold St Margaret's, but St James at Hemingford Grey was an early twelfth century parish foundation belonging to Huntingdon Priory (Page et al 1974b, 314). Interestingly both churches have evidence of twelfth century construction with a central tower at each, an early form that does not persist in Huntingdonshire churches. Generally speaking, there does seem to be a reasonable correlation between the dates of the later foundations and that of their fabric, whilst the dates of the first stone construction for Domesday churches is usually no earlier than the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. It is not being suggested, of course, that the foundation of churches can be established from the date of their earliest existing fabric: many excavated stone churches have proved to have earlier wooden predecessors (Morris 1989, 149).

It is probably safe to assume from the archaeological and documentary evidence that the geographical location of most of the Domesday churches correspond to that of their later medieval successors, but Eynesbury may be the principle exception for reasons that are discussed below. Architecturally, the existing Eynesbury church exhibits an interesting architectural enigma that may reflect an unusual history. The chancel has been remodelled at various dates but the earliest stonework is low in the south wall and is estimated to be twelfth-century — fairly typical for stone churches in the Ouse Valley of Huntingdonshire. However, what is unusual is the series of capitals in the north arcade (typically of Huntingdonshire churches the oldest arcade [Baggs 2000, 43]), suggesting that the nave was constructed from the west end rather than more conventionally from the chancel end (RCHME 1926, 84). As can be seen from Plate 6.1, there is a clear progression stylistically from the westernmost capitals of the late Romanesque to Early English at the chancel end¹⁴. It is difficult to think of a technological reason for the decision of the builders to proceed in this way, but perhaps the explanation lies in the specific history of the parish, which was going through a process of fission at this time.

¹⁴ The RCHME suggests that on stylistic grounds the building should be dated to about 1170-1180 (RCHME 1926, 84).

Plate 6.1 Eynesbury Parish Church, Capitols in the North Arcade



CAPITALS IN THE NORTH ARCADE

Left: Norman

Right: Early English



Settlement and Parish Formation in the St Neots' Area

The key historic changes in the structure of parishes and settlements in the St Neots, Eynesbury, Eaton Socon area have their roots in the twelfth century. During the course of that century, there was a general propensity for manorial proprietors to seek an element of control over local ecclesiastical arrangements and this tended to stimulate the process of the sub-division of parishes (Blair 2005, 498-499). In Eynesbury, the most significant changes occurred with the fission of the Domesday *parochia* following the re-establishment of a Benedictine priory sometime about 1078 (originally founded c. 974 [Gorham 1824, 138]), which was confirmed by charter in 1113 (Gorham 1824, civ). The Priory was able to establish the completely new township of St Neots by at least 1156-7: the first recorded mention of the new name for St Neots (Page et al 1974b, 337). The founding of a new township had implications for the way that the major manorial centres, their attendant settlements, and parish formation developed within this locality (Gorham 1824, 138; Blair 2005, 336)).

The principle manors at Eynesbury prior to the Conquest were in the hands of two manorial lords, Robert son of Wimarc (which, post 1066 was granted to the Gilbert family) and Edward the Confessor (but granted to Waltheof when he was created Earl of Huntingdon on his marriage in 1070 to the Countess Judith, William 1's niece) [Page et al 1974b, 338]. In 1086 the Gilbert manor (fifteen hides) was in the hands of Rothais, wife of Richard the son of Gilbert. In 1086 the monks of St Neots' Priory held part of the land (land for three ploughs) from Rothais (Morris & Harvey [eds.] 1977, 20, 6), but by the time of the charter of 1113 they had been granted the

whole of this manor¹⁵. The Countess Judith held the old royal manor (nine hides) at the time of Domesday, together with the church and priest (Morris & Harvey [eds.] 1977, 20, 6)¹⁶. By 1111, however, this church appears to have been given to the Priory of St Neots by Simon de Senlis, the son-in-law of the Countess Judith (Page et al 1974b, 344). It is most likely that it was also this church, referred to in the bull issued by Pope Lucius III (1181-1185) in 1183 as St Mary of *St Neots* (Gorham 1824, 303), which the Priory was given permission to appropriate¹⁷. Another bull of Pope Celestine III, dated 1194, refers to the appropriation of the church of St Mary at *Eynesbury*. It is unclear whether this was confirmation of the bull of 1183 and, therefore, is about the same church (St Mary of *St Neots*), or whether this applies to another church elsewhere in Eynesbury, but the evidence suggests the latter. The archaeological record for late Saxon settlement in the area points firmly to a large Saxon settlement being occupied from the tenth century and abandoned sometime during the twelfth century away from the later medieval centres of Eynesbury and St Neots (CCC HER ref. 00567), supporting the idea that the Domesday township was abandoned and the tenants of the Priory manor moved to a new centre to the west around the Market Square; whilst at the same time those of the Earl of Winchester were re-settled south of the Hen Brook (CCC HER ref. 00374).

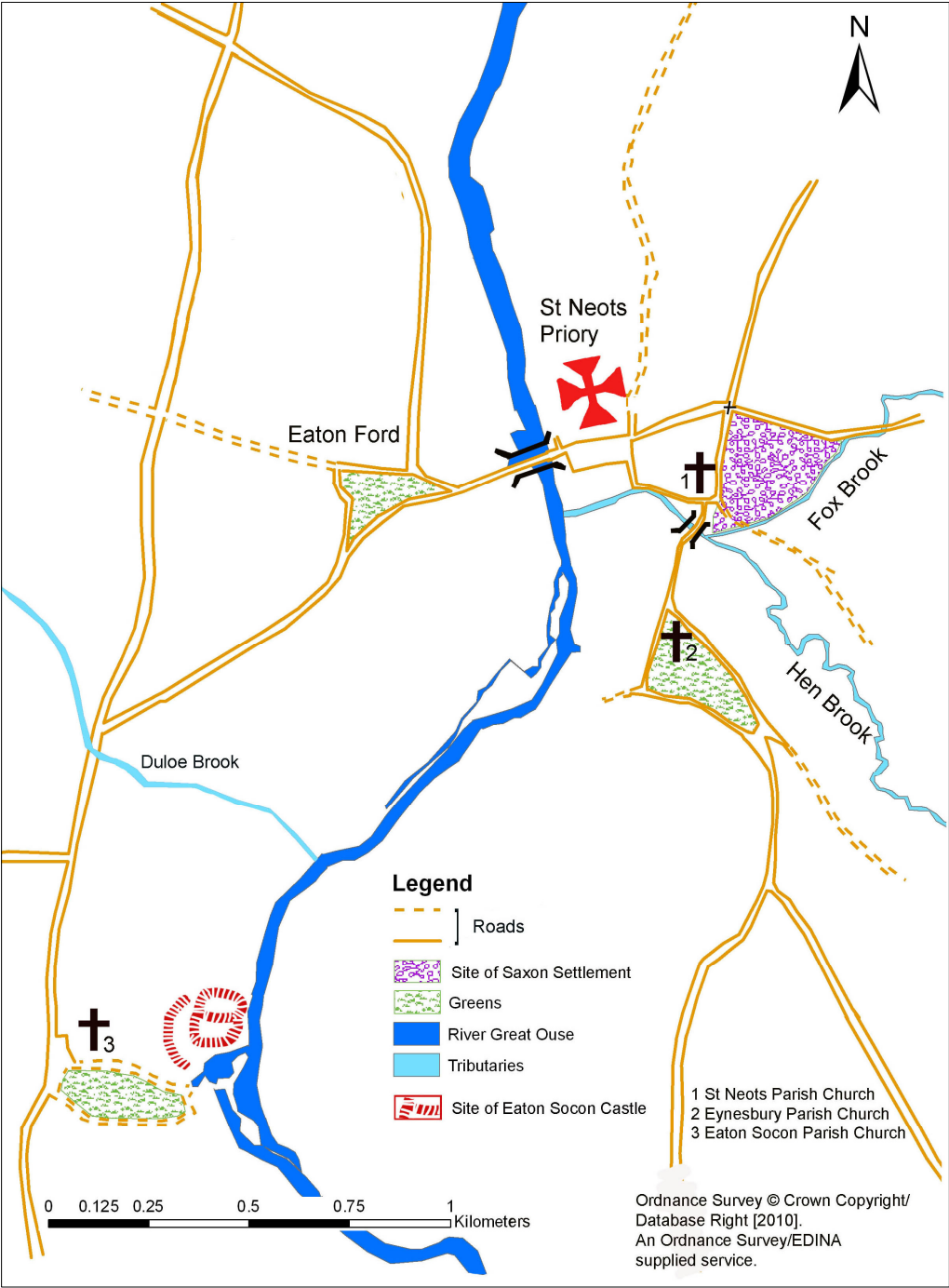
Plan 6.3.

¹⁵ The full account of the history of the Manor of St Neots (as this manor later became to be known) can be found in Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 339-341.

¹⁶ Earl Waltheof was executed in 1076 and the earldom of Huntingdon eventually passed to Simon de Senlis on his marriage to Maud, Earl Waltheof and Judith's eldest daughter. The Countess's manor of Eynesbury passed, thereby, to the Earl of Winchester (Page et al 1974a, 5).

¹⁷ The implication is that the Priory was establishing a separate township from the previous one near the original site of Eynesbury. By 1156-7 the township of St Neots was identified for the first time by name, and in 1188 the 'men of St Neots' are mentioned in a Pipe Roll (Page et al 1974b, 337).

Plan 6.3 St Neots' Historic Centre, eleventh and twelfth centuries

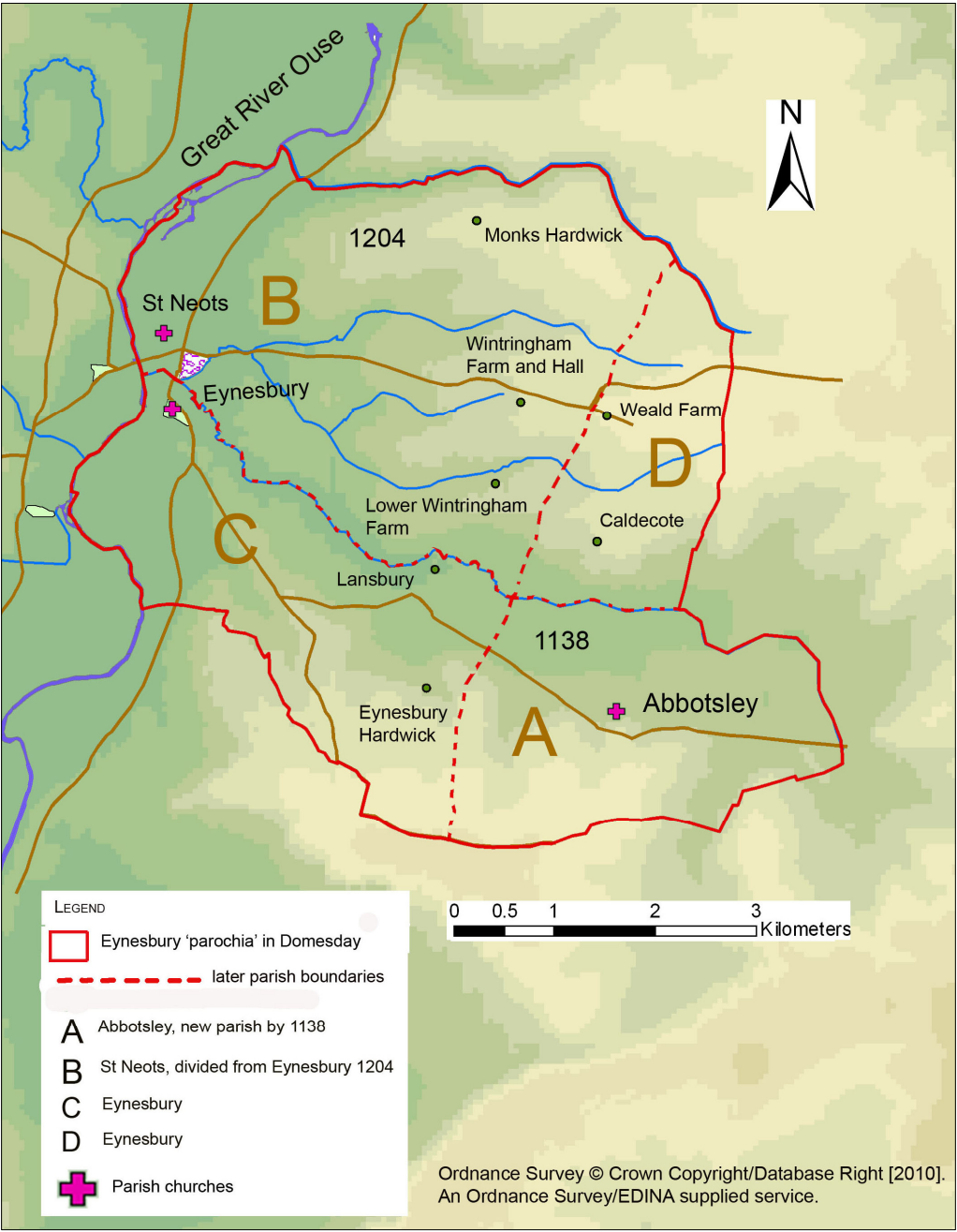


The nave of St Mary's at Eynesbury (present church) is executed in the transitional style of the late twelfth century and has been dated, more specifically to about 1170-80 (see above). It would, therefore be 'in the building' at the time of the bull of Pope Lucius III, but by 1194 could well be completed and therefore have been seen by the Priory as an infringement of their rights in the *parochia* of Eynesbury (which was presumably previously wholly served by their church). This may have been the cause of the issue of the other bull by Pope Celestine and implies that this later bull may refer to this new church at the re-settled Eynesbury. Indeed, the bull of Lucius specifically referred to St Mary of *St Neots*, whilst in that of Celestine the church is specifically referred to as St Mary at *Eynesbury*. This would be a church built on the lands other than the Priory's and may represent an attempt by the monks to gain control of the new church. The dispute over the advowson of the church at Eynesbury between the Priory and the Earl of Winchester was finally mediated by a bull of Pope Innocent III dated 1201 (Gorham 1824, supplement cxviii); a final agreement was reached in 1204, which resolved the dispute and formally divided the *parochia* of Eynesbury in line with its existing manorial divisions (Abbotsley having previously been taken out of Eynesbury by 1138 [Page et al 1974b, 258]).

The argument may be summarised as follows. During the course of the twelfth century, mainly to suit the ambitions of powerful proprietors, the original Saxon *parochia* of Eynesbury was subdivided into a number of smaller parishes: Abbotsley had been created by 1138 and St Neots by 1204. This initiated the construction of two new parish churches and the rebuilding of the third, although there remains some doubt as to where the original *Eynesbury* church was located. It is suggested that the present day Eynesbury church may have been a new foundation built to accompany a

planned village that relocated tenants of the Earl of Winchester's estate from an older settlement not far from the present day St Neots' parish church to south of the Hen Brook. If that is so, it is possible that this was the second Eynesbury church to have been built, with the previous one being on or near the site of the present St Neots' church. There were also chapels within the medieval parish of St Neots at Wintringham, and in the post-1204 Eynesbury parish at Hardwick and Weald, although none of these have survived (Gorham 1824, 121-122, 183). Plan 6.4

Plan 6.4 Fission of the Eynesbury Parochia in the eleventh and twelfth centuries



COMMENTARY

Despite the difficulties of establishing the origins of most parishes in detail in the national context, it has been possible to determine a broad chronology for those in the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley particularly post 1086. However, the origins of the Domesday *parochiae* are less discernable, even for the more important churches like Holy Trinity, the Minster at Great Paxton. What is certain, however, is that both the number of churches increased in the two hundred years following the Domesday survey, and a number of new parishes were established. Interestingly, many of the new churches were chapels and, as with the new parish churches, were invariably being built in stone by the twelfth century. Later (and sometimes much later) a few chapels became parish churches in their own right (for example, Woodhurst and Kings Ripton) whilst others, like the ones at Earith and Needingworth have disappeared altogether. The relationship between church building, the community and parish structures, adds to our knowledge and understanding of contemporary settlement.

Prior to the emergence of secular responsibilities for parish communities from the sixteenth century, the parish was a purely ecclesiastical affair. A township might have its secular administration performed through the local manorial or hundred courts, whilst responsibility for its ecclesiastical needs could be vested in the church of a neighbouring township. Frequently the territory of medieval parishes could be quite extensive although in other cases (for example, in the Offords and the Hemingfords) separate parishes were established for new townships as they were created during the course of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries; often what happened was down to local politics.

Civil parishes started off using the boundaries of the ecclesiastical parishes from which they sprang. Over time, in Huntingdonshire at least, the tendency was for the territorial unit attached to each township to be given civil parish status, and this is the situation within the modern settlement pattern. The boundaries of civil parishes have, over the years, undergone many changes, often quite minor in extent. Despite this they still remain a reasonably secure basis for the mapping of parish areas and they have been adopted in this analysis (with the greater variations taken into account) as the boundaries for both civil and ecclesiastical parishes.

The way that townships relate to each other through their parish structures help us to understand how communities experience *place*, now and in the past. For example, the division of parishes that occurred in the eleventh and twelfth centuries did not necessarily mean that neighbouring townships lost their community ties — the close relationship of the Hemingfords even today illustrates this (exemplified by their sharing a common conservation area). The effect of parish fission in the St Neots' area during the Middle Ages (and in more recent times the effect of fusion as well — see Chapter 5 above) remains one of the more interesting examples of parish formation and re-alignment over a very long period. Parish fission can leave unresolved issues that resurface later and that under changed circumstances result in a re-fusion of townships into enlarged administrative areas.

Complex settlements have complex histories and the parish as a unit of analysis enables us to explore them in close-up, as well as providing a stable framework within which rural settlement has developed and changed. Over the period, since its establishment and consolidation in the twelfth century, modifications have occurred to this framework but it has

maintained itself remarkably intact. The pattern of settlement within the parish system often reflects earlier settlement morphology, and factors that shaped and determined the extent and boundaries of parishes in the first place preserve earlier topographies. The parish, as a unit of analysis, preserves these differences and their histories illustrate settlement continuity and change. In the Ouse valley, in particular, this variety is there in abundance and an exploration of this variety is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7: PRINCIPAL MORPHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS OF THE OUSE VALLEY SETTLEMENTS

“..the sun was shining in a cloudless sky, and the light vapours arising from the Ouse were hovering over a little hill near St Neots, when suddenly the village of Great Paxton, its farmhouses, barns, dispersed cottages, trees, and different grass-fields, were clearly and distinctly visible in a beautiful aerial picture, which extended from east to west, about 400 yards...”¹

¹ from The Pleasures of Sight: A Poem by John Holland, 1829

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the form of individual Ouse Valley settlements is considered and analysed within the parish context discussed in the previous chapter. The emphasis here is on individual settlements within their landscape, taking into account the relationship between the various morphological elements that contribute to character and an enduring sense of place. These elements include the settlement's topography as well as individual landscape features, such as buildings and field systems — which together create a unique set of spatial relationships.

The aim is to build an appreciation of *form* within a localised scale of analysis, which identifies broad morphological periods of settlement development. The emphasis has been on landscape observation in the field, an important factor in understanding how settlement is actually perceived, supplemented by documentary and map evidence. The emphasis of the analysis for each settlement is on spatial analysis and character, but the available space has not allowed a full consideration of the contribution of architectural style or building materials.

In Chapter 5, the woodland/champion division of the countryside was discussed in relation to settlement patterns in the Ouse Valley. It was suggested that whilst these characterisations help to explain various aspects of Huntingdonshire's settled landscape, neither on their own fully explains the district's morphogenesis. The exploration of individual settlements in this chapter demonstrates how complex this relationship between 'woodland' and 'champion' countryside actually is in this part of Huntingdonshire. It questions how closely related the Ouse Valley is to the Midlands' champion region of which it is considered to be part.

Understanding Parish Settlement Patterns

Settlement patterns within the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley are difficult to define because the geographical spread of nucleated and dispersed elements is very mixed with many parishes encompassing a range of settlement types. For example, whilst medieval Abbotsley had a single nucleated settlement, the neighbouring parish of Eynesbury contained both nucleated and dispersed settlement elements. The creation of a hybrid classification in areas of mixed nuclear and dispersed settlement, whilst that might generate a more acceptable form of settlement classification in itself, tends to imply that one or other type is the norm. Early sources (both in the form of map and documentary evidence) demonstrate this great diversity within the settlement pattern of the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley.

A challenge for landscape historians considering the history of settlement has been establishing the early form of present day settlement. Other studies, which have used nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey maps as a basis for determining settlement morphology, have tried to extrapolate from this data the nature of its preceding medieval settlement pattern, but with mixed success (Lewis et al 1997; Roberts & Wrathmell 2000 & 2002). Earlier maps for this part of Huntingdonshire are not superabundant, but there is a good series of estate and inclosure maps dating from the eighteenth and very early nineteenth century either just before or about the time of Parliamentary Inclosure. These maps, therefore, show the distribution of habitation and field elements prior to or at the point at which the communal agricultural system was finally abandoned. With this earlier material the precise nature of the Ouse Valley settlement morphology is taken back to a series of pivotal events in the transformation

of the Huntingdonshire landscape, before the older morphology was masked by the fully enclosed landscape of the later nineteenth century.

Whilst the evidence from Parliamentary inclosure maps cannot (in itself) firmly establish the nature of medieval settlement patterns, or effectively close the gap between the morphology of the medieval settlement pattern and the modern day, it is suggestive of the form of earlier settlement morphology. Although caution needs to be exercised before drawing too firm an opinion in this respect, using this material as a baseline and comparing the data with later maps, earlier evidence, and the archaeological record, this study attempts to record changes in settlement distribution and settlement type over time. Medieval settlement is seminally important within this narrative, but it is only one element in the complete story and should not be seen as an end in itself.

Domesday survey material is acknowledged as an obvious starting point for understanding early settlement and reference to it is made throughout the analysis that follows. Table 7.1 below summarises the relevant Domesday entries for each township indicating the scale of settlement in the eleventh century. This table, besides recording basic Domesday information for each of the townships included in it, also allows a comparison to be made between townships. Useful as the Domesday statistics are, however, it needs to be borne in mind that the settlements recorded were often to be swiftly modified by the ensuing developments in the social, administrative and economic structures brought about during the course of the twelfth century (Taylor 1983, 126-127; Lewis et al 1997, 238-240; Jones & Page 2006, 79).

Other useful sources include the respective Heritage Environment Records for Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire and reputable parish and

county histories — especially the Victoria County History for Huntingdonshire and Gorham's History of Eynesbury and St Neots — themselves based on an extensive range of primary sources. Additionally, as and when appropriate, reference has been made back to the statistics for Huntingdonshire townships recorded in the Domesday survey. However, these historical sources, particularly plans and maps, will not show how places are experienced from the ground. It is necessary, therefore, to place what is learnt from the plan view within the results of field observation and other information gained locally.

Table 7.1 Summary of Resources at Places Recorded in Domesday Survey

VILL	HIDAGE	PLOUGHLANDS	PLOUGHS	VILLAINS	BORDARS	SERVII	CHURCH	PRIEST	MILL	MEADOW	WOODLAND	WOODLAND ACREAGE *
EYNESBURY	24	55	52.5	53	15	0	1	1	3	125.5a	60a	60
EATON SOCON <i>Including Sudbury & Wyboston</i>	40.5	31.5	31	59	23	11	0†	0†	2	For 16.5 ploughs	For 500 pigs	500 — 750 (?)
PAXTON	25	41	39	60	8	0	1	1	3	80a	1x0.5L4f	840
SOUTHOE	6.5	11	8	16	0	0	0	0	0	30a	63a	63
BOUGHTON	1	2	1.5	5	0	0	0	0	0	7a	0	0
DIDDINGTON	5.5	3 + 6 oxen	6	13	1	0	1	0	0	40a	0.5Lx0.5L + 5fx4f	392
OFFORD	20	25	20 + 2 oxen	35	18	0	1	1	2	60a	16a	16
BUCKDEN	20	20	19	37	20	0	1	1	1	84a	1x1 L	1,008
BRAMPTON	16	15 + 10 oxen	18	36	5	0	1	1	2	100a	1Lx2f	168
GODMANCHESTER	14	57	26	80	16	0	1	1	3	160a	50a	50
HEMINGFORD	40	32	23 + 2 oxen	49	6	0	1	1	3	170a	0	0
FENSTANTON	13	18	13	24	8	0	1	1	0	80a	0	0
BLUNTISHAM	7	8 + 5 oxen	6	12	3	0	1	1	0	20a	1Lx4f	336
HOLYWELL	10	11	8	26	6	0	1	1	0	30a	1Lx4f §	336
SLEPE	20	27	29.5	44	18	0	2	2	0	60a	1x1L	1,008
HOUGHTON	7	12	12	31	5	0	1	0	1	60a	1x0.5L	504
WYTON	7	12	10	24	5	0	1	1	1	40a	0	0
HARTFORD	15	17	12	30	3	0	2	1	2	40a	1x0.5 L	504

* The formula for calculating woodland (which includes wood pasture) is as suggested by Rackham (2003, pp. 113-115).

† Bedfordshire Domesday greatly under-recorded churches (unlike Huntingdonshire) therefore a failure to record a church at Eaton Socon does not mean that one did not exist.

§ At Holywell marshland of 1 league is also recorded (approximately 1,008 acres).

Analysis of Settlement

Having examined the evidence, both that derived from historical documents, plans and other sources, it is possible to place individual parishes into a number of broad categories — as shown in Table 7.2 below. This is a useful tool for analysis, but care needs to be taken to ensure that the essential individuality of places is not lost in the process. The four broad categories in Table 7.2, therefore, form a loose framework within which to consider settlement type and distribution, and the classification should be seen principally as an analytical convenience. However, the classification does help the relationship between morphological elements within the individual parishes to be better understood, as well as allowing perceptions of place to be adequately described.

None of the categories are completely exclusive and there are some parishes that share attributes across category boundaries — often, whatever category a particular parish is placed under is a matter of best fit and this will become obvious in the course of the detailed analysis that follows. In particular, the difference between categories 3a and 3b is a matter of the degree of complexity caused by differences in their geography and topography. However, it can be stated at the start that the position of Eynesbury, St Neots and Eaton Socon is unusual in that the decision was made in the nineteenth century to create new administrative arrangements that would eventually take a part of each of these three parishes and form a new administrative area. Therefore, these parishes will be dealt with as a group and in more detail later in the chapter.

Table 7.2: Categorisation of Parish Settlement in the Ouse Valley of Huntingdonshire

1. MEDIEVAL PARISHES (Ecclesiastical) Single Townships surviving into modern times as Civil Parishes.	2. LATER (Civil) PARISHES with Single Townships created by fission of complex Medieval (Ecclesiastical) Parishes*.	3a. MEDIEVAL (Ecclesiastical) PARISHES with Complex Settlement Patterns surviving into modern times as Civil Parishes.	3b. MEDIEVAL (Ecclesiastical) PARISHES with Dispersed Settlement Patterns surviving into modern times as Civil Parishes.
Abbotsley	Gt Paxton; Lt Paxton; Toseland	Eynesbury/ St Neots	Diddington
Hemingford Abbots	Fenstanton; Hilton	Eaton Socon	Southoe†
Hemingford Grey	Hartford; Kings Ripton	Buckden	Midloe§
Houghton	St Ives; Woodhurst; Oldhurst	Brampton	† Includes the church at Hail Weston in the ecclesiastical parish (then as now) but not in the civil parish of Southoe. § Extra parochial in Middle Ages, then separate civil parish, now with Southoe.
Wyton	*Grouped by medieval association	Holywell-cum-Needingworth	
Offord Cluny		Bluntisham-cum-Earith	
Offord Darcy			
Godmanchester			

NARRATIVE

1. Medieval Parishes with Single Townships

There are eight medieval parishes within the study area that on the earliest maps contain a dominant habitation centre typical of nucleated settlement and communal agricultural practices (open arable fields, meadows and commons). They vary considerably in size, age, and probably also in organisation (see Category 1 in Table 7.2, above).

Offord Cluny and Offord Darcy [Plate 7.1]

The village centres for both the Offords are situated within close proximity of the St Neots to Huntingdon highway (which runs a little to the east of the course of the Ouse) and the townships are contiguous one to the

other. Situated low in the valley of the Ouse, near to the river, little can be seen of the open country beyond the village streets of either settlement. Consequently, the townships' fields, which lie to the east of the settlements, seem rather disconnected from their homesteads when viewed from the valley bottom. These fields, rising on rolling countryside to a low ridge about 50 metres AOD, are best experienced from the lanes and small track ways leading out of the townships; from where it can be observed that many have, at the present time, lost most of their hedges, possibly presenting an open aspect similar to before Parliamentary inclosure.

The principal village street for both settlements is also the main road from St Neots to Huntingdon. Village houses are dispersed along this road, originally separated by small closes, which are now frequently subject to infilling. Many of the older cottages and farmhouses are timber framed, frequently rendered. Later cottages are of local buff brick, but one or two of the larger and more important residences were constructed using a soft red brick. In the past thatch was widely used, some of which survives.

The inclosure maps of 1800, Map 7.1 (HRO: PM 3/8a) and the plan of post-inclosure field boundaries in 1806, Map 7.2 (HRO: PM 3/8b) show that the homesteads in Offord Cluny were in close proximity; but the location of these homesteads, relative to each other, was irregular with variable plot sizes. The situation was similar at Offord Darcy, Map 7.3 a plan dated 1794/5 (HRO: 2110/15/24) where there was the same irregular distribution of homesteads and plots. There was no green, or topographical evidence of one having existed, at either township; however, at Offord Cluny the township enjoyed common pastures (holms) just south of the church at the time of Inclosure. Offord Cluny parish was unenclosed except for the enclosures around the homesteads themselves at the time of Parliamentary

Inclosure in 1800. This was in contrast to Offord Darcy, inclosed 1811, Map 7.4 (HRO: PM 3/9) which at Inclosure already had 43% of its land enclosed, much of which is known through documentary evidence to have been so by the early seventeenth century (Page et al 1974b, 322).

Domesday records one township at Offord, but this was divided soon afterwards². In 1086 the area now covered by both the Offord parishes were recorded as having 60 acres of meadow and 16 acres of woodland. The woodland probably disappeared during the course of the Middle Ages as none was recorded on either inclosure maps and the small amount of woodland currently existing consist of small spinneys or plantations of more recent date. However, an area at the eastern side of the parish situated on higher ground known as the Purlows (or in later maps the Purlieus) suggests that this area may once have been wooded — a possibility that is supported by the topography. Certainly, Graveley, the next township to the east, sharing similar topography, was once heavily wooded, as indeed its name suggests (Wright & Lewis [eds.] 1989, 320; Gelling & Cole 2003, 228).

² The two civil parishes of Offord Cluny and Offord Darcy were merged into one parish in April 2010.

Plate 7. 1 Offord Cluny and Offord Darcy Today



Offord Cluny township fields



Offord Cluny church of All Saints

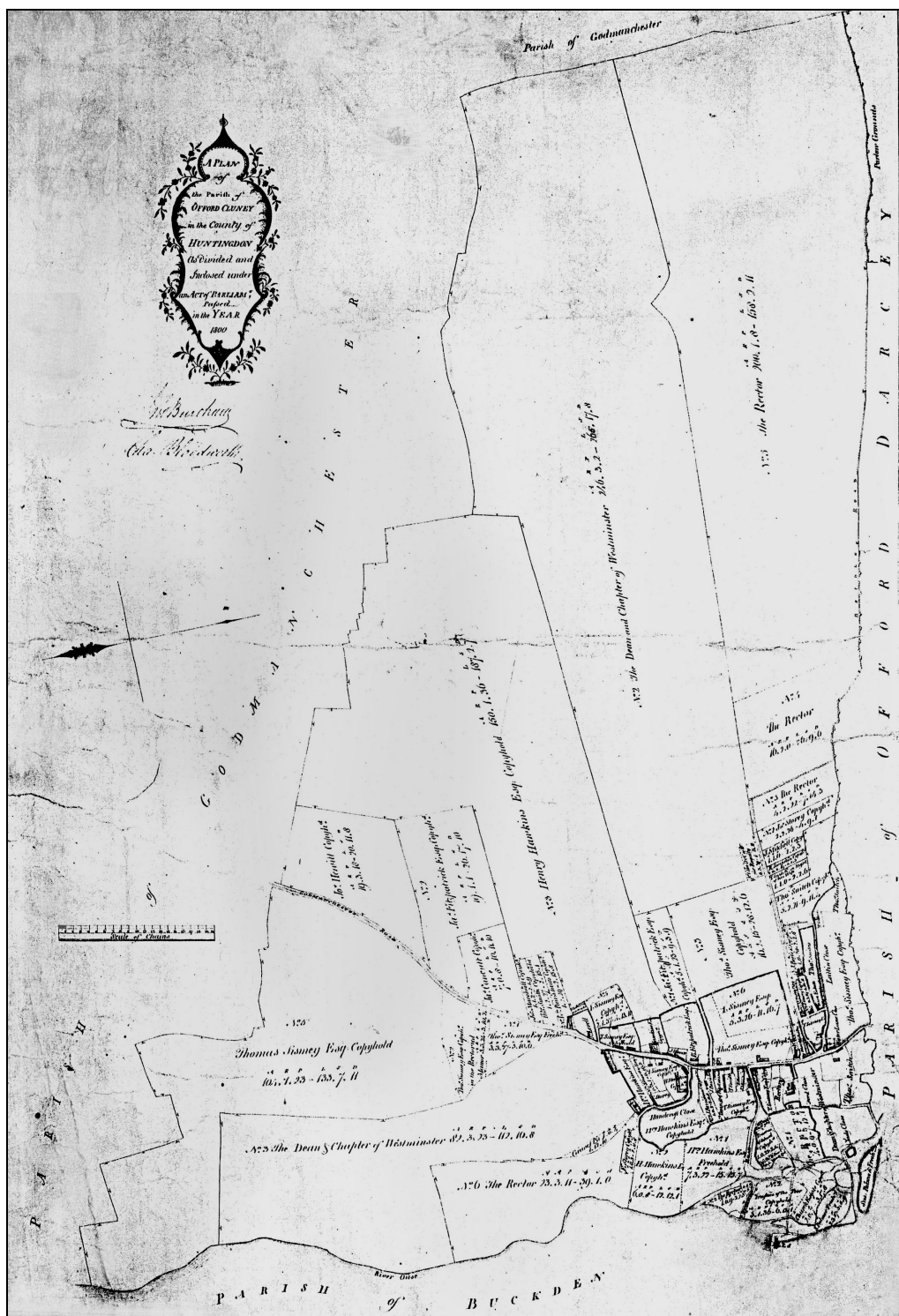


Offord Cluny principal village street



Offord Darcy principal village street

Map 7.1 Offord Cluny draft inclosure map 1800



Map 7.2 Offord Cluny post-inclosure map 1806 – detail



[illegible]

Gravelley Parish

Huntingdon

Map of the Boundary, Allotments, and Enclosures in the Parish of Gravelley in the County of Huntingdon.

Table of Land Parcels:

No.	Owner	Area	Remarks
1	John Smith	100	100
2	John Smith	100	100
3	John Smith	100	100
4	John Smith	100	100
5	John Smith	100	100
6	John Smith	100	100
7	John Smith	100	100
8	John Smith	100	100
9	John Smith	100	100
10	John Smith	100	100
11	John Smith	100	100
12	John Smith	100	100
13	John Smith	100	100
14	John Smith	100	100
15	John Smith	100	100
16	John Smith	100	100
17	John Smith	100	100
18	John Smith	100	100
19	John Smith	100	100
20	John Smith	100	100
21	John Smith	100	100
22	John Smith	100	100
23	John Smith	100	100
24	John Smith	100	100
25	John Smith	100	100
26	John Smith	100	100
27	John Smith	100	100
28	John Smith	100	100
29	John Smith	100	100
30	John Smith	100	100
31	John Smith	100	100
32	John Smith	100	100
33	John Smith	100	100
34	John Smith	100	100
35	John Smith	100	100
36	John Smith	100	100
37	John Smith	100	100
38	John Smith	100	100
39	John Smith	100	100
40	John Smith	100	100
41	John Smith	100	100
42	John Smith	100	100
43	John Smith	100	100
44	John Smith	100	100
45	John Smith	100	100
46	John Smith	100	100
47	John Smith	100	100
48	John Smith	100	100
49	John Smith	100	100
50	John Smith	100	100
51	John Smith	100	100
52	John Smith	100	100
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59	John Smith	100	100
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61	John Smith	100	100
62	John Smith	100	100
63	John Smith	100	100
64	John Smith	100	100
65	John Smith	100	100
66	John Smith	100	100
67	John Smith	100	100
68	John Smith	100	100
69	John Smith	100	100
70	John Smith	100	100
71	John Smith	100	100
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77	John Smith	100	100
78	John Smith	100	100
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81	John Smith	100	100
82	John Smith	100	100
83	John Smith	100	100
84	John Smith	100	100
85	John Smith	100	100
86	John Smith	100	100
87	John Smith	100	100
88	John Smith	100	100
89	John Smith	100	100
90	John Smith	100	100
91	John Smith	100	100
92	John Smith	100	100
93	John Smith	100	100
94	John Smith	100	100
95	John Smith	10	

Houghton and Wyton [Plate 7.2]

A close geographical relationship such as that shared by the Offords can be found also between Houghton and Wyton townships where the areas of habitation were again contiguous with one another. The townships of Houghton and Wyton were already established by 1086, each with their separate manor and church. The two churches are within about 400 yards of each other and Domesday records a priest at Wyton, with no priest at Houghton (Morris & Harvey [eds.] 1975, 6,8; 6,9). The implication is that the same priest served both churches, as from later evidence it is known that in 1252 both churches were described as ‘mother’ churches, but had never been held separately — an arrangement that continued into modern times (Page et al 1974b, 253-4). The manors at each of these townships had been granted to Ramsey Abbey in the late tenth century, but by the eleventh century there was a single manorial court for both (Page et al 1974b, 179 & 253). It is likely, therefore, that by the time of the original grants to Ramsey both townships were within separate ecclesiastical parishes, as it is difficult to see the advantage of building two churches once both townships and their associated manors were the property of one lord.

By the time of Domesday it is arguable that Houghton and Wyton were moving towards fusion (in antithesis to the Offords, which were in the process of fission). The working arrangements for the administration of manorial business that Ramsey Abbey put in place whilst it held both townships (that is, one court for both manors and the appointment of one priest to serve both churches) lessened the need for complete fusion. However, it may also be true that the fusion of the separate parishes was more difficult to achieve where, as in this case, each township had its own field system and customs with regard to the way in which their communal

agricultural regimes functioned³ (Blair 2005, 504). Whatever the reason that complete fusion did not occur in the Middle Ages (not, in fact, until the twentieth century) these two parishes are unusual for this part of Huntingdonshire in terms of their settlement history.

What is less unusual, however, is the close proximity of the two townships and the manner of the management of their landscapes. In these particulars Houghton and Wyton are not dissimilar to the Offords or the Hemingfords, which are all examples of townships closely connected geographically. By the time of the inclosure awards (1775) Houghton and Wyton had become visually one continuous settlement with no discernable separation: only the existence of two medieval churches reflected their earlier morphology, Map 7.5b (HRO: PM 2/24 1773). In the late eighteenth century, habitation in these two townships (almost without exception) was clustered in the vicinity of the parish churches and the farms that had superseded the manorial demesne; however, there was also some development along an ancient back road between Huntingdon and St Ives, which ran through both townships. Properties were built at fairly regular intervals along a number of lanes which ran as spurs off the main through road, or clustered on the outskirts of the village streets around farms situated within a series of small closes that typified this part of the two parishes. Homesteads along the village streets were built abutting the roadway in most cases and were generally in close proximity. Many of the older cottages have one-and-a-half storeys and timber-framed, often rendered and probably previously thatched, see Plate 7.2.

³ For example, although both townships were recorded as having seven hides each, it is clear from later evidence that the hides were of different sizes, with the Houghton hide containing six virgates whilst the Wyton hide had five (Ramsey Abbey Cartulary, iii, 278).

In both places the parish churches lay south of the main areas of habitation situated between the through route to St Ives and the river. As with many of the townships along the valley of the Great Ouse, Houghton and Wyton are closely associated with the river and cannot be said to ‘sit amongst their fields’ — Map 7.5a, 1773 (HRO: PM 2/24). The town fields in this instant are situated to the north of the present A1123 between Huntingdon and St Ives, and rather cut off by it. The countryside rises gently to the north, but not so as to give much visual connectivity with the townships’ habitation.

Houghton still has the remnant of its green and this was probably rather larger in the past, forming a triangular space between the church and the manorial complex. This space remains the memorable image of the village today, see Plate 7.2. Wyton may have had a similar arrangement, but there is no recognisable green today. The stages that were passed through to create the late eighteenth-century morphology out of the settlement forms alluded to in Domesday remain obscure. The present day morphology of these two settlements might be better understood if the effects of possible population decline in the fourteenth-century and the manner of any subsequent re-expansion were known.

The joint Inclosure map for the twin townships indicates that there was already a great degree of earlier piecemeal enclosure, particularly around the principal areas of habitation, in a belt running east/west along the axis of the Huntingdon to St Ives road. Within the northern part of the old parish of Houghton there are also a number of small irregular fields that look like assarts, which they may well be as in Domesday (Morris & Harvey [eds.] 1975, 6,8) Houghton had a wood pasture of 1 x 0.5 leagues, an estimated 504 acres using Rackham’s formula (Rackham, 2003, pp. 113-

115)⁴; none of which has survived into modern times⁵. The enclosure of the remaining common fields in 1795 looks as if the boundaries chosen were often those of the furlong boundaries although this is as yet unproven. During the course of the nineteenth century members of the local gentry acquired many of the enclosures east of Houghton upon which were built small country houses or large villas within miniature designed landscapes (OS map 25" 1st edition 1880), Map 7.6 and Plate 7.2. This became quite a feature of this part of the parish and marks an interesting and unusual change in local settlement morphology. Why exactly this happened here is uncertain, but was presumably associated with the expansion of St Ives to the east and made possible because this was an open parish with a number of landowners.

⁴ Nearly the same size as the surviving Monk's Wood in Huntingdonshire (Natural England web site: www.naturalengland.org.uk/).

⁵ In contrast, Wyton had no woodland recorded as belonging to the township in 1086.

Plate 7. 2 Houghton and Wyton Today



Houghton ridge and furrow



Houghton main village street



Houghton village centre



Wyton village street

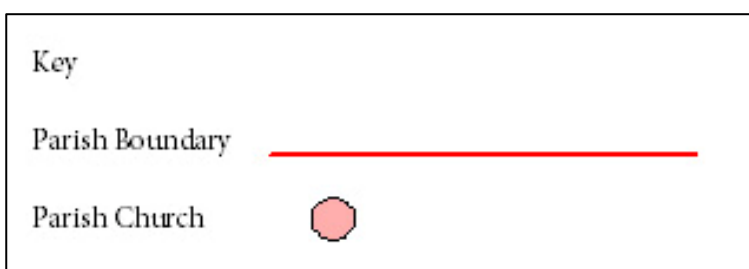


Nineteenth century gentry house at
Houghton

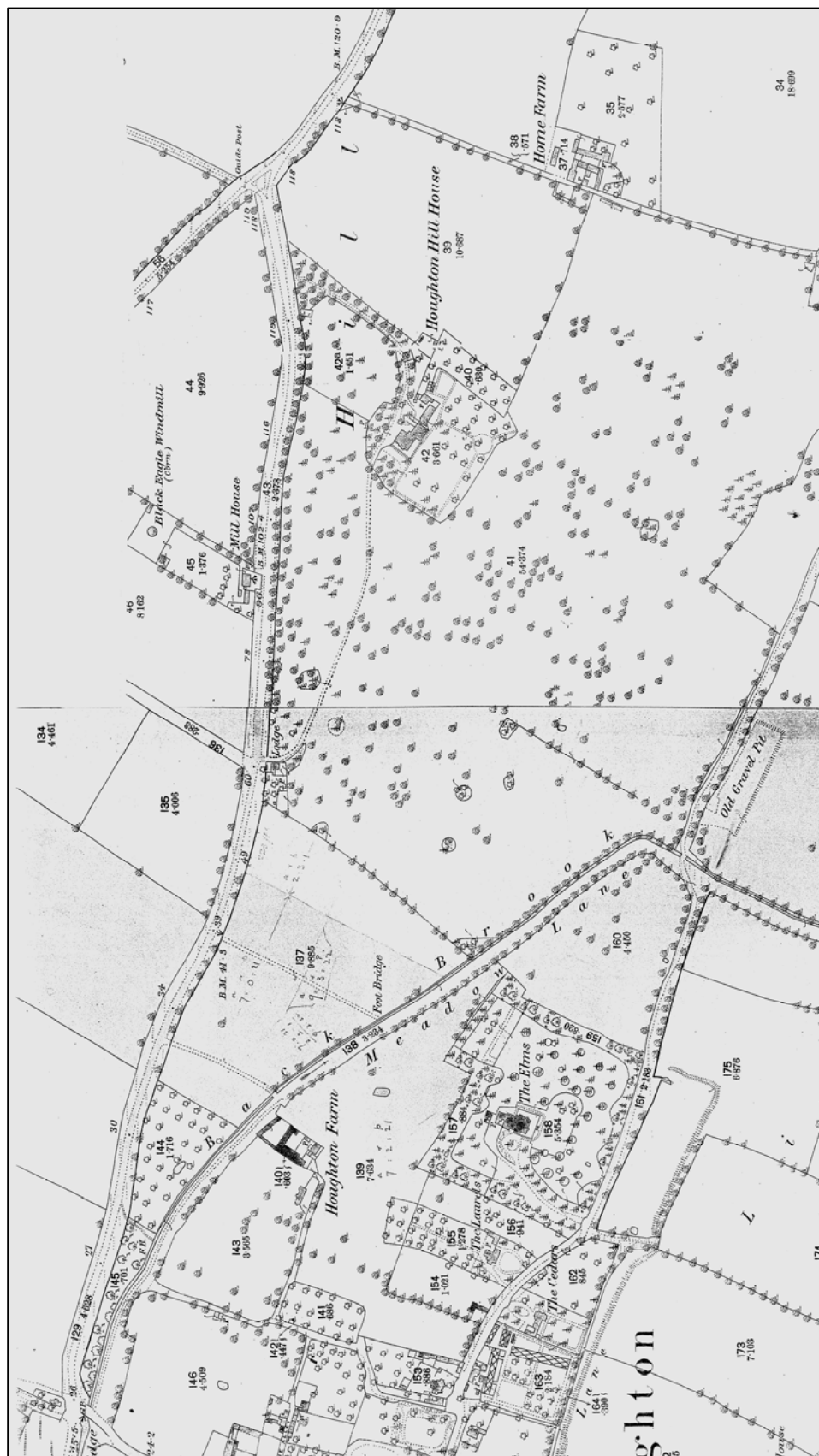
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Map 7.5b Houghton and Wyton Inclosure Map 1774 – detail



Map 7.6 Houghton and Wyton OS 25" 1st edition 1880 – detail



Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey [Plate 7.3]

The Hemingfords are another example of twined townships where habitation is, for the most part, clustered around their respective churches and principal manorial complexes, see Plate 7.3. Hemingford Abbot's village centre is now quite built up with nineteenth and twentieth century brick houses infilling areas previously open between older timber-framed buildings. At Hemingford Abbots there is also strong evidence for early dispersal, certainly before the time of Inclosure, which may or may not be a residual element of earlier medieval dispersal. The Inclosure map of 1801 does not show all the topographical detail, but it does illustrate the fact that there were a number of buildings both to the west of the village centre along Common Lane and to the east towards the parish boundary with Hemingford Grey, Map 7.7 (HRO: PM 2/19). The latter is a long lane, still called the High Street today, suggesting that it has historically been the location for township homesteads, and the site of at least one of the minor manors (CCC HER ref. 01043; 01058; 02768). The buildings shown on the inclosure map seem to have been the more significant ones, perhaps those belonging to the more important farmers. Comparison with buildings on the National List prove that quite a few cottages and houses which must have existed at the time of the map's creation were left out⁶. Many of the buildings outside the centre of the township (particularly along the east to west axis) are dated to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, suggesting that this has been a area of extended settlement for at least four hundred years, and possibly longer⁷.

6 Details checked against the Listed Buildings Register for Hemingford Abbots, Huntingdonshire District Council Planning Department.

7 Rectory farmhouse, a seventeenth century building along the Cambridge Road, also evidences early dispersal.

It is also along this east to west axis that the inclosure map records the greatest number of old enclosures. The early to mid-nineteenth century Hemingford Park took in a number of these older enclosures, an area in which there is also extensive medieval ridge and furrow (CCC HER refs. 11427, MLB 17568, 10127), which suggests that this vicinity may at one time have been part of the common fields. However, the enclosures shown on the inclosure map do not fit the pattern of medieval ridge and furrow visible on the aerial photographs, indicating that the boundaries of these enclosures did not follow those of the original medieval furlongs⁸. There is a cluster of small and early enclosures with associated habitation on the parish boundary where Hemingford Abbots' High Street meets Manor Road in Hemingford Grey Parish. This is the site of the possibly ancient hamlet of Thorpe, possibly part of an important estate owed by King Hardecnut (Carter 1998; Beresford & Butterfield 2006). However, the evidence for this is not conclusive and the term 'thorpe' was used to describe a small place well into the twelfth century. Hardecnut's estate, wherever it was actually situated, had been granted to Ramsey Abbey prior to the Conquest, but afterwards formed the core of Aubrey de Vere's lands at Hemingford Grey (Morris & Harvey [eds.] 1975, 6,18). The survival of a habitation cluster here with sixteenth and seventeenth century cottages may support the possibility that prior to the establishment of Hemingford Grey township in the twelfth century, the Domesday township of Hemingford was an area of more dispersed settlement.

At the time of inclosure Hemingford Grey was a township of nucleated settlement not unlike other townships that emerged in this part of

⁸ It is just possible that this enclosure occurred at an early date; as, for example, on the Commons at Godmanchester and Huntingdon, where previously cultivated land was turned over to permanent pasture during the course of the Middle Ages.

Huntingdonshire post-Conquest, such as Abbotsley. Apart from a few buildings at Thorpe (mentioned above) and the site of the mills, all habitation is clustered between the principal manorial site (a moated site by the river) and the parish church to the northeast. The oldest (late-medieval) houses are timber-framed with thatch, but later buildings were typically of buff brick with tile or slate roofs, see Plate 7.3.

There is what appears to be a relict green, now largely built over, with the original crofts along its southern edge. Until inclosure in 1806 the common fields would have come up against the built environment, without the buffer of extensive township enclosures as is found in many other places Map 7.8 (HRO: PM 2/20). There were some older enclosures in the vicinity of Thorpe, but the greatest concentrations were towards the eastern and southern boundaries of the parish. These enclosures did not have any elements of habitation associated with them and were clearly cut out of the open fields, probable at an early date and possibly before 1630 (Porter 1992, 83).

Together the Hemingfords present an interesting case when all the evidence is considered, Plan 7.1. The twelfth century division into two townships created parishes with distinctive differences of settlement morphology, which may partly reflect the complexity of land tenure recorded in Domesday — that is, the more complex settlement pattern at Hemingford Abbots was the result of a more complex manorial structure, whilst Hemingford Grey reflected the hegemony of the eleven hides held by the De Veres. Certainly, the newly formed township of what was eventually to be called Hemingford Grey was expansively laid out with tenements, a newly constructed parish church and the principal manor (also twelfth century [Page et al (eds) 1974b, 309]). These were set around an extensive

triangular green and a system of common arable fields, pasture and meadowland in what can be recognised as a classic champion countryside style. Hemingford Abbots, on the other hand, although bearing many indications of reorganisation, looks more like a dispersed Huntingdonshire settlement morphology with twelfth century modifications⁹. That is to say, the organisation of the Hemingford Abbots township appears less planned than that at Hemingford Grey. Hemingford Abbots shows evidence of quite extensive dispersed settlement and early enclosure from the sixteenth century at the latest. It is possible that in this parish some dispersal survived through from before the twelfth century. Both Hemingford Grey and Hemingford Abbots also have relict moated sites, an indicator elsewhere of earlier dispersal (Lewis et al 1997, 3); however, by the time of Domesday the area occupied by both these parishes was recorded as having no woodland at all.

⁹ for example, as noted in the previous chapter Hemingford Abbots parish church shows evidence of a twelfth century rebuilding and the green south of the church and principal manor could be the result of a twelfth century reordering exercise.

Plate 7. 3 Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey Today



Hemingford Abbots village centre



Royal Oak Lane, eastern edge of a relict green



Hamlet of Thorpe



Hemingford Grey High Street



The Maltings, Hemingford Grey village green development

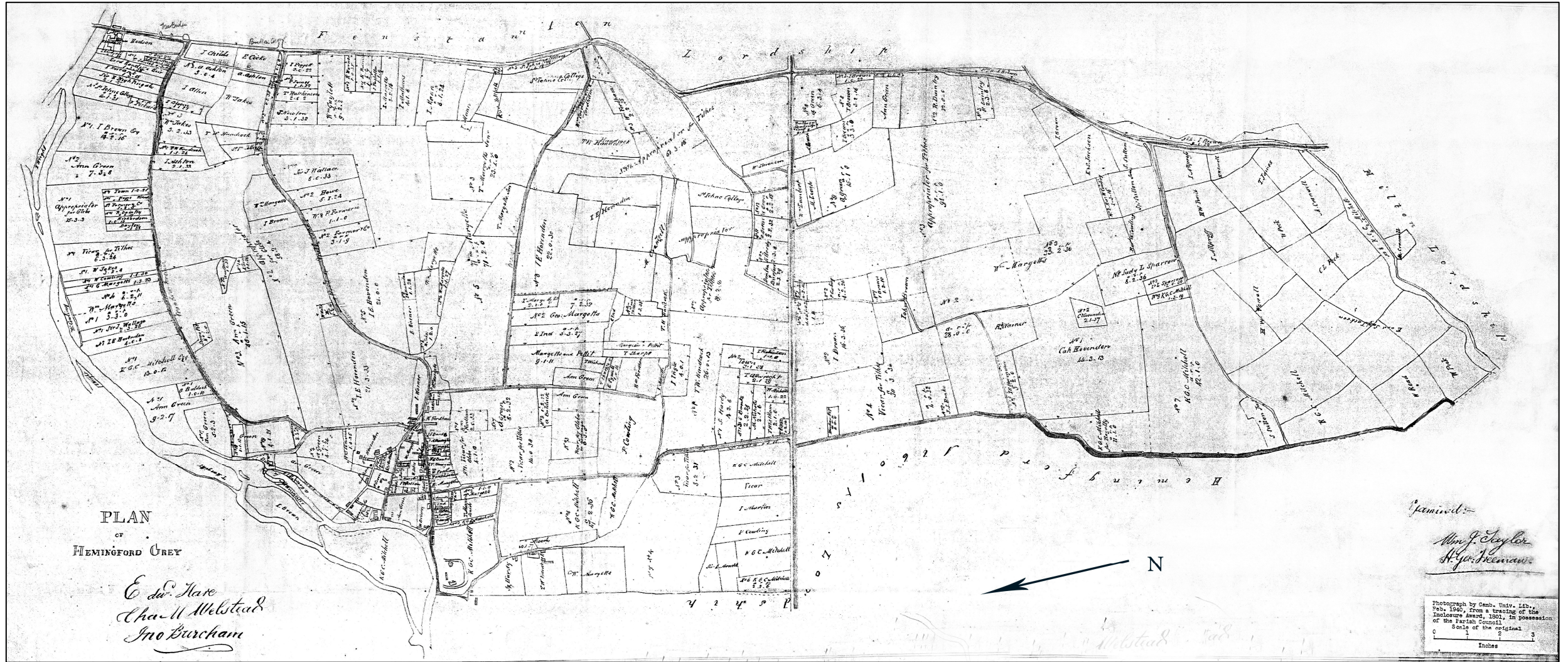


River at Hemingford Grey with church of St James in the distance

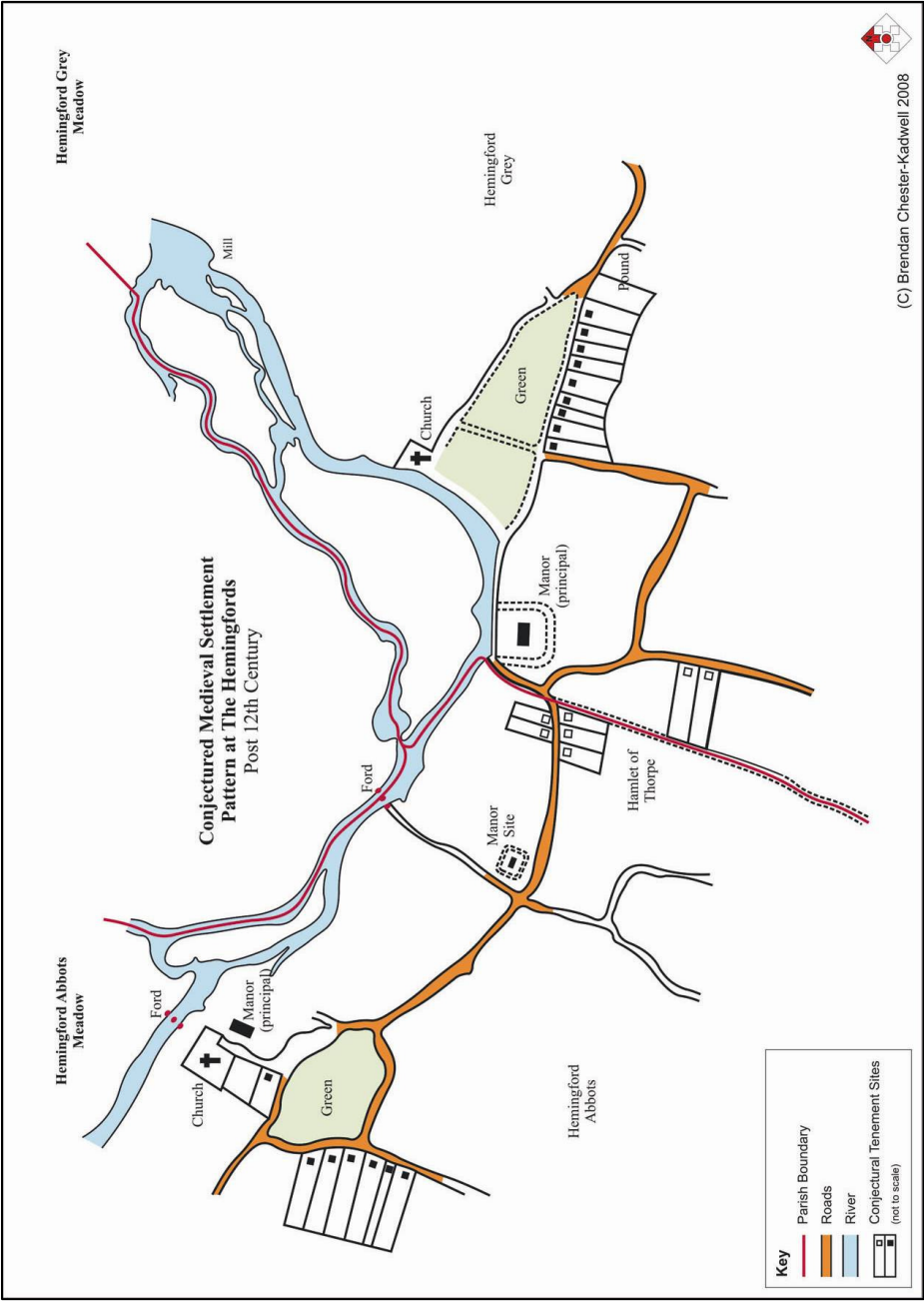
PLAN
of
Henningford Abbots

N

Map 7.8 Hemingford Grey inclosure map 1801



Plan 7.1 The Hemingfords conjectured post twelfth century settlement form



Abbotsley [Plate 7.4]

Abbotsley was another township with strongly clustered habitation set within a multiple system of open fields. It is situated along the road between St Neots and Great Gransden where the Ampthill clay meets the Lowestoft till on rising land above and to the south of Abbotsley Brook. It is at the end of a low ridge of land, which sets it above many of its fields and gives the habitation a compact feel, connected with its countryside.

Abbotsley was a separate township with its own parish church by 1138 (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 259), and the layout of the settlement is typical of other Huntingdonshire townships originating in the twelfth century. That is, a central green with associated tenement row, manorial site and the parish church. However, unlike the townships that grew up along the Ouse, the village is central to the parish, surrounded by its fields. The green is south of the principal village street, and at the time of inclosure there were a number of farmsteads both in the vicinity of the green and along the Gransden road to the east; after inclosure other farms were built within the fields to the east and south of the older centre of habitation, see Plate 7.4.

A row of houses and cottages north of High Green may mark the location of the township's medieval tenements, although archaeological evidence of Late Saxon settlement has been excavated at Lion Farm (TL 23035648) to the east of the green. At Manor Farm and Waterloo Farm there are a series of ponds that were previously considered to be evidence of moated sites (Page et al 1974a, 294), but which are no longer believed to be so (CCC HER refs. 01135, 01136). However, the existence of these water features (possibly water-supply ponds) may still indicate early settlement sites and their disposition corresponds with other known moated sites nearby, within a local topography that supported early, dispersed

settlement. There was certainly settlement at Abbotsley prior to its emergence as a separate township, a dispersed element amongst others in the Eynesbury *parochia*¹⁰.

This parish was inclosed in 1838, quite late for Huntingdonshire. The Abbotsley Inclosure Map shows the extent of the common fields as well as giving the boundaries of the new allotments and the old enclosures, Map 7.9 (HRO: PM 1/1). There was little enclosure prior to the Parliamentary Act and the township closes were small and usually no more than the curtilages to extant buildings, tightly packed around the village streets but not elsewhere in the parish. At inclosure there were three large common fields that wrapped around the clustered habitation from the northwest quarter, around its eastern side and to the south. To the west there were a couple of middling size open fields with two smaller ones beyond — the pattern of fields in the southwest quarter could reflect the topography at this point as the ground rises to undulating clay hills which may have been wooded in early medieval times.

The present day village still preserves many older houses and cottages around its green and parish church. These are of varying dates and styles, including timber-framed and rendered cottages (many thatched), later brick built houses (either local soft reds or gault clay). Originally situated in large village plots that were frequently separated by small closes originally, many of which have now been built upon.

¹⁰ Abbotsley, in the early twelfth century had been granted to a member of the Scottish royal family, the man who was to become David I of Scotland. If it was he who was responsible for the establishment of Abbotsley as a new township the strongly planned feel of the settlement would be consistent with his achievement elsewhere.

Plate 7. 4 Abbotsley Today



Fen End Farm



Village green

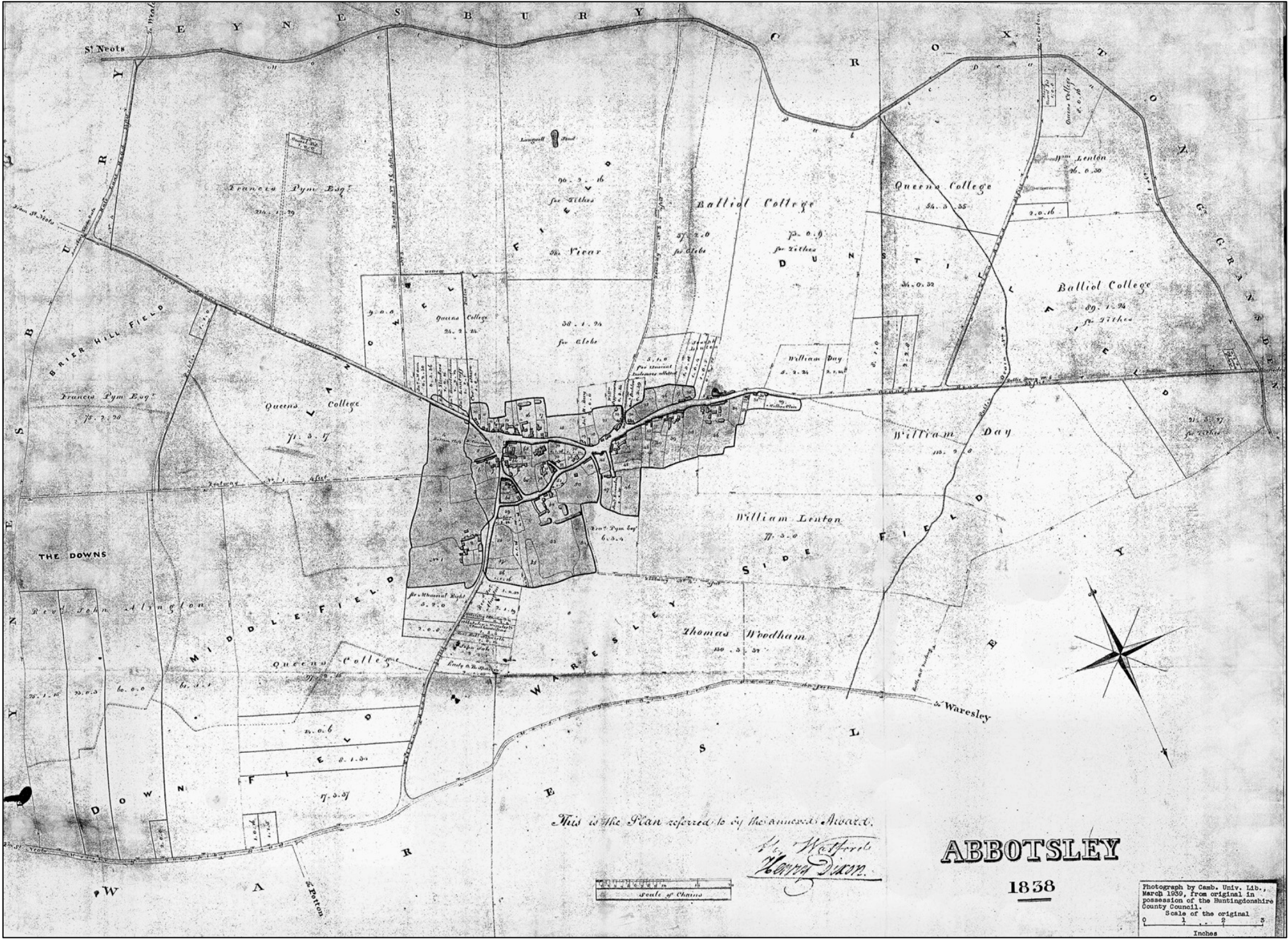


Manorial site



Principal village street

Map-7.9 Abbotsley inclosure map 1838



Godmanchester [Plate 7.5]

Godmanchester has an interesting settlement morphology that has been greatly influenced by a Roman town on Ermine Street, whose site it occupied. None of the Roman remains are now visible on the surface, but many features of the contemporary settlement reflect this older morphology; in particular the local road network and the way that later habitation respected the site of the Roman built area.

Godmanchester was within the tribal area of the *Catuvellauni* whose capital was at *Verulamium* (modern day St Albans). The Romans established a fort at Godmanchester to control the river crossing here prior to their invasion of the North (Green 1975, 185). Three roads converged at this point: Ermine Street (the principle Roman road from London to the North); the road from Cambridge (sometimes called the *Via Devana*); and the road from Baldock and Sandy (Margary 1973, routes 2b, 24, 22). As its military importance declined its civil significance rose and it became the site of a Roman town, *Durovigutum*. By the third century *Durovigutum* had a range of civic buildings that indicated that it had some status (possibly that of a *vicus*) and by the end of that century the civic core was enclosed within stone defences (Branigan 1987, 85-87). There was also substantial Roman settlement along the roads leading to the area enclosed by the stone defences of *Duroviguto*, including evidence for workshops, cemeteries and agricultural activity (Hatton 2003, 19-20). However, by the late fourth century the town was in decline and there is some evidence that it may already have hosted some early Saxon settlers (Branigan 1987, 188-189).

The core of the Roman town was abandoned at some point and, for whatever reason, the Saxons did not fully resettle it later; in fact it remained conspicuously open until the late twentieth century. The approximate area

of the Roman fortified settlement is easily identified today as the area circumscribed by London Street, Old Court Hall, The Causeway, West Street (now called Cambridge Street) and Earning Street.

Today's habitation patterns, however, have their origins in the centuries following the English Settlement after the departure of the Roman Legions in the early fifth century. There is little archaeological evidence to indicate where the first Saxon settlers built their homesteads although evidence of early Saxon habitation has been found on a number of sites in and around Godmanchester. Within the area of the Roman town some evidence was forthcoming off Pinfold Lane and along Cambridge Street and St Anne's Lane — all areas that demonstrate continuity of occupation through to modern times. Additionally, evidence of an early Saxon farmstead or hamlet was discovered south of the Roman town site (Hatton 2003, 20-21).

This area of the country became heavily contested during the Danish incursions of the ninth century and was occupied by Guthrum after 879, after whom Godmanchester is supposedly named (Mawer & Stenton 1969, 225). The whole district (later to become Huntingdonshire) was administered from a Danish burgh north of the Ouse, on the site of present day Huntingdon; it is most likely that the Danes also settled in Godmanchester. The Saxons under Edward the Elder retook the settlement in 917 (Hatton 2003, 21).

Excavations along Earning Street near the Roman south gate have revealed Saxo-Norman activity in the vicinity of the town ditch that ran from West street, partly following the line of the Roman defences around Godmanchester, and passing along East Chudleigh Lane and around the parish church to the north. This had been re-cut in the eleventh century and

parts of the old Roman defences were still being maintained at that time (Green 1961, 90-98).

In the early part of the Middle Ages Godmanchester prospered, as did other places in the Ouse Valley. It was recorded in Domesday as a royal manor (Morris & Harvey 1975, 1, 10), but was granted to the freemen of Godmanchester as a self-governing manor in 1212 (Page et al 1974b, 286). Self-governing status, as at Huntingdon, permitted the townsmen themselves to control extensive commons, a practice that continues to this day.

During the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries changes were taking place at Godmanchester that were to influence the development of the settlement until modern times. Between 1135 and 1154 a new manor was created around the church, which was granted (together with the church) to Merton Priory in Surrey (Page et al 1974b, 294). Although the manorial lands were not extensive, they were significant. Of particular interest was the creation of a park around the site of the parish church and the manorial site (the latter marked today by the remains of a moat east of the church). A curvilinear boundary reputedly formed by the park pale (although not definitely confirmed as such) can still be traced in part and may account for the abandonment of the Roman alignment of Ermine Street in favour of one following present day Post Street (Hatton 2003, 22). At the same time it is possible that the line of the Roman road from Cambridge, which previously would have passed through the manorial site, may have been rerouted to the south of the park along present day St Anne's Lane. Even after the park was decommissioned (and the evidence is that it did not remain as a working park for long [Reynolds 1992]) the changes it effected continue to influence the form of this part of Godmanchester today. Plan 7.2.

By the end of the thirteenth or early fourteenth century the modern street pattern of Godmanchester had been fixed. The route of the Cambridge road appears to have been straightened, once the Park had gone out of use, leaving St Anne's Lane as a back lane; the town cross shown on the map of 1517 may well have been erected at its junction with Post Street at that time, Plate 7.6 (HRO: LR8/324). The old causeway at the north end of Post Street, which probably partly followed the original Roman alignment of Ermine Street, was rebuilt to the east (its present position) soon after 1331, bisecting Godmanchester West Common and connecting to the newly built stone bridge over the Ouse. In the south of the settlement, medieval commercial activity was most intense between the Causeway (then part of Post Street), the cross road at the junction of West Street and Pinfold Lane and the junction of Old Court Hall and Duck End (now Silver Street). This was where the markets and fairs were held (although there was no formal sanction for this activity during the Middle Ages) and the London Road was diverted into it from the east along London Street. Pipers Lane appears to have formed the back lane to this street. South of London Street there was significant medieval settlement, later abandoned (most probably after the Black Death) and earthworks associated with this are still extant at Buttermel Meadow (Hatton 2003, 26-27).

From the late thirteenth century onwards deteriorating climatic conditions and natural disasters such as the Black Death undermined economic progress. Furthermore, political upheavals like the Hundred Years' War and the Wars of the Roses created social instability. Consequently the late medieval period saw economic decline and at Godmanchester settlement dwindled.

Improvements to the social and economic situation during the

sixteenth century saw increased prosperity in Godmanchester, and the town started to expand again as is attested by various buildings of that date. In 1524 the townsmen gained control of the floodgates at Houghton and Hemingford and in 1604 the town was at last incorporated (Page et al 1974, 290-291). By this charter the right to hold two annual fairs were granted; one for cattle and sheep (last held in 1870) and another for horses (last held in 1914). Godmanchester's importance as a river port grew with the improvements to the Ouse navigation during the course of the seventeenth century and the prosperity of the town further increased, so that at that time it was described as "a very great county Towne, and of as great name for tillage; situate in an open ground, of a light mould, and bending to ye sun" (Page et al 1974b, 286).

During the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the town was practically rebuilt and many of its historic buildings date from this period; but this development took place within its existing pattern of streets. However, with the exception of parts of Post Street, Causeway and Old Court Hall, where there was some continuously built up street frontages, Godmanchester's built environment was loosely grained with most streets consisting of detached homesteads set within their curtilages. This is amply illustrated on the enclosure map of 1803 (HRO: PM 2/12). Map 7.10

The causeway carrying the road over a series of bridges south of the Town Bridge from Huntingdon was rebuilt in 1637 and the bridges were again repaired in 1767 and rebuilt in 1784 (Page et al 1974b, 286). This was a time of road improvement and repair under the Turnpike Acts and Godmanchester benefited from the improvements in the national road network with the increase in the coaching trade. As elsewhere the coming of the railways led to the decline in road transport, although river portage

held on until the twentieth century, in particular the portage of coal from Kings Lynn.

Godmanchester continued to depend on agriculture although there was some industrial development. A stocking factory was established in 1850 south of the Bridge near the railway station, Map 7.11. There was also a tan-yard, iron foundry, and brickworks amongst other small industries. Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, street frontages were built up throughout the settlement, which effectively created a more urban feel and emphasised the openness of the centre which remained an open back-land with the exception of Pinfold Lane. Godmanchester did not develop extensive post-enclosure residential areas as happened in the other Huntingdonshire towns until the second half of the twentieth century. A small development occurred connecting Pinfold Lane to St Anne's Lane called New Street and there was some further development eastwards along Cambridge Road (notably Cambridge villas, a mid-twentieth century council house development), but apart from the establishment of a series of town allotments, that was all (OS 6" 1st ed. 1885; OS 1:10,000 1950).

The survival of extensive commons at Godmanchester, under the active management of the towns' Commoners, has prevented large-scale modern development, except on the southern and eastern sides of the settlement. Consequently, much of Godmanchester can be experienced today as a small country town within its own open land, and its spatial relationship with the river has been largely preserved. The town has buildings from all ages, reflecting its long history and demonstrating a wide range of building materials and architectural styles. However, unlike St Neots and St Ives, its plots are not the long burgage type found in the former places, being typically the village closes of agricultural holdings.

Plate 7. 5 Godmanchester Today



Looking from Post Street to West
Common



Earning Street

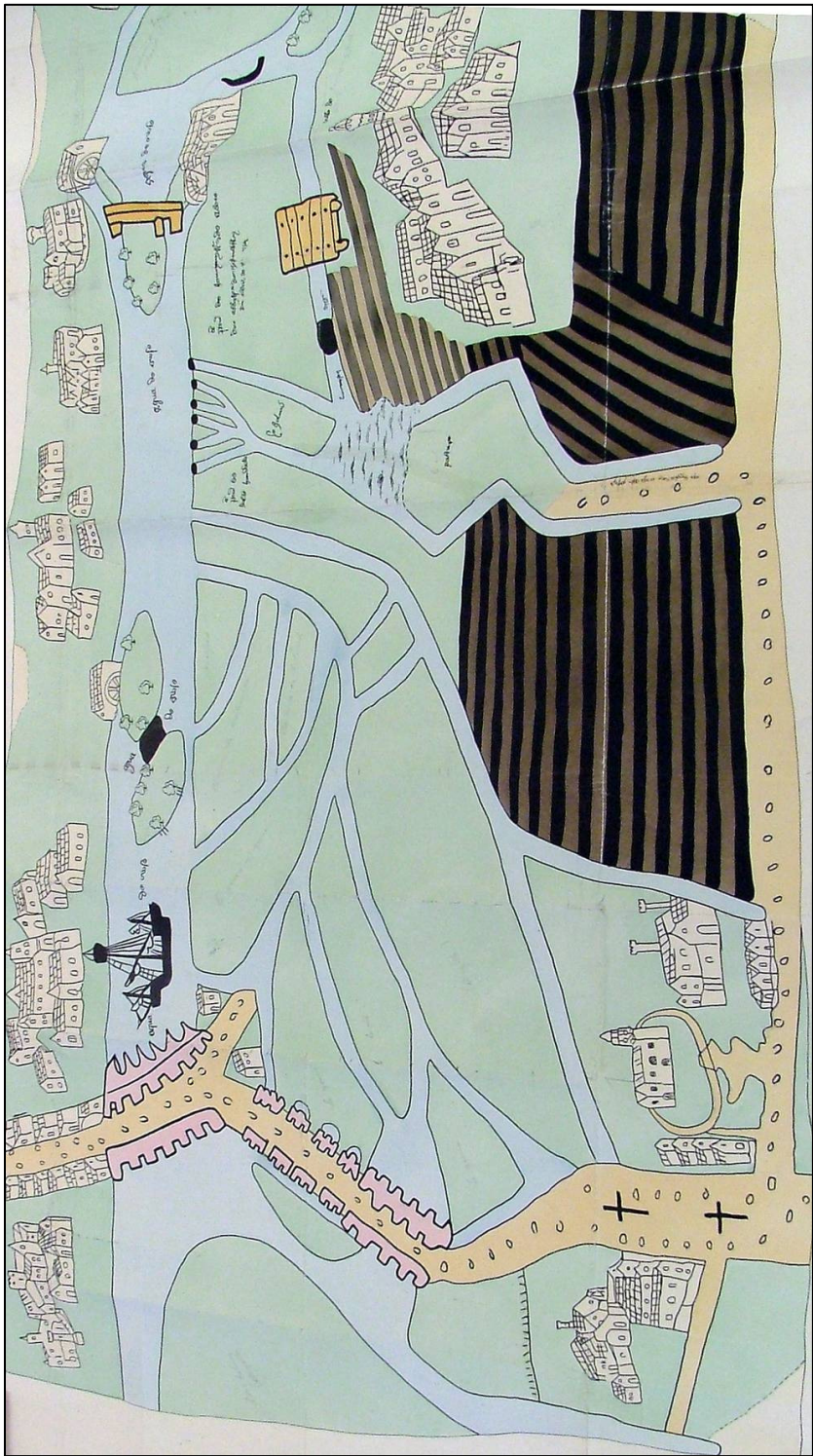


Nineteenth century mill and town bridge
over the River Great Ouse



Basin at Godmanchester

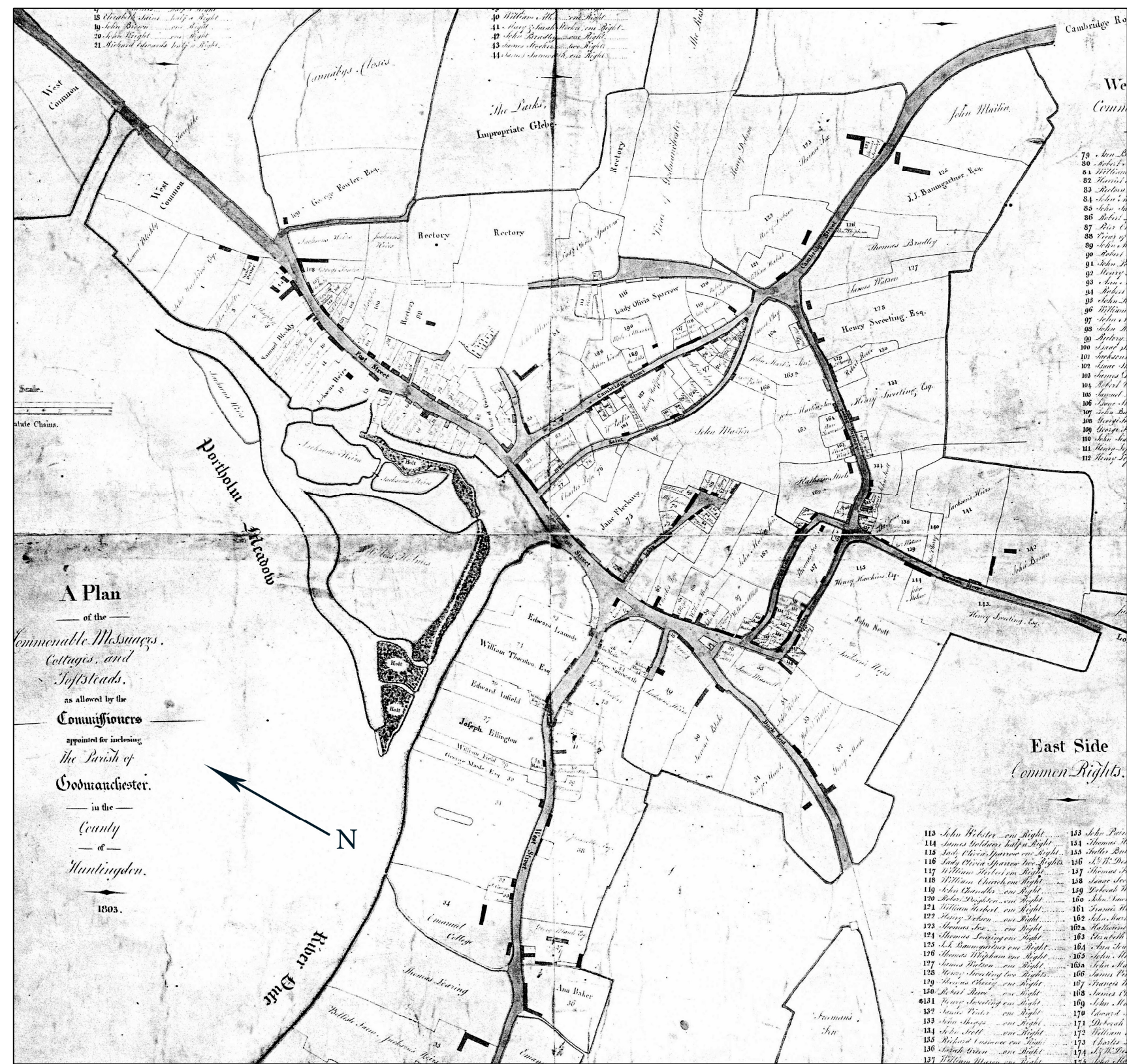
Plate 7.6 Godmanchester and the Ouse Valley c. 1517



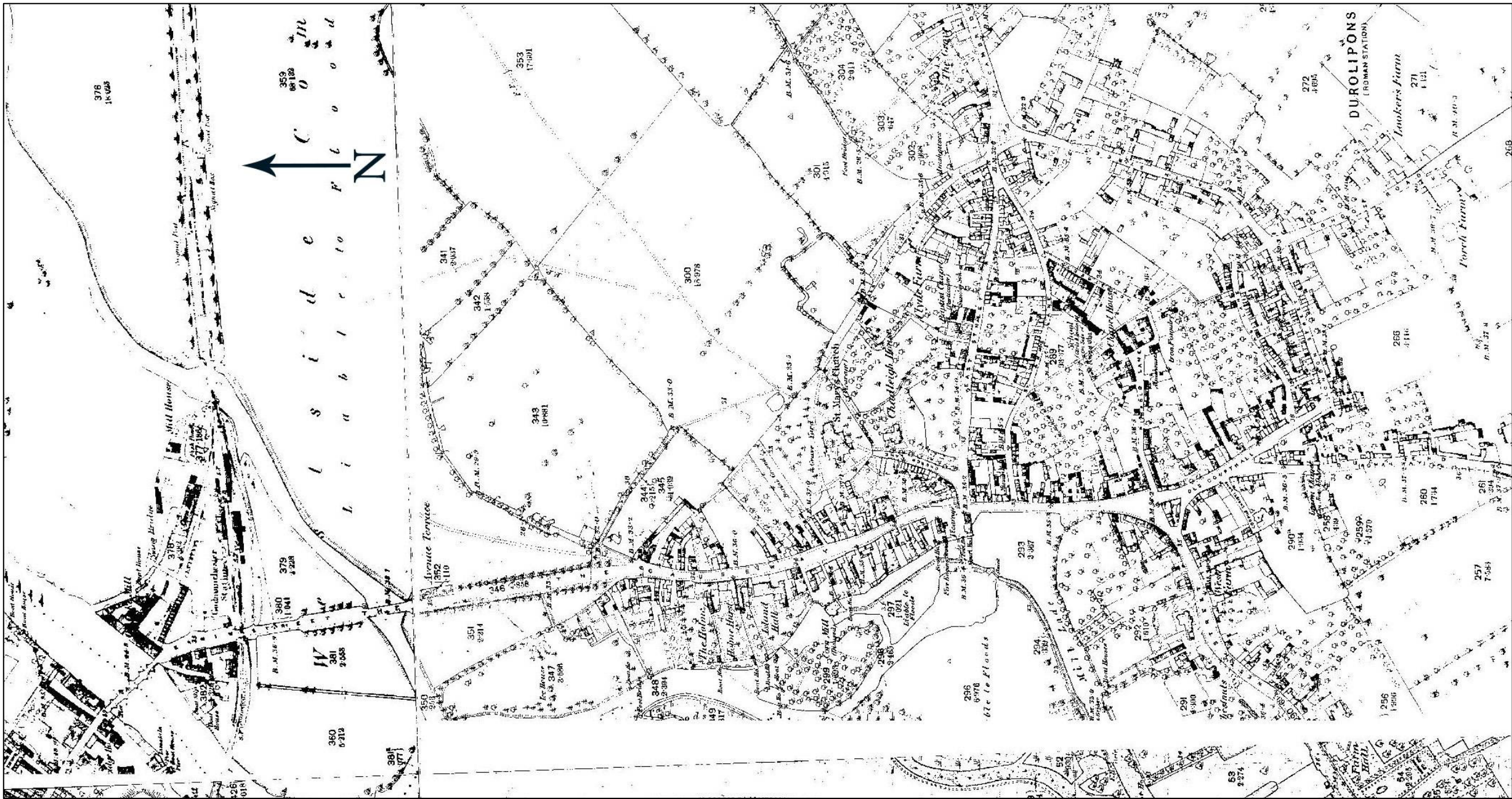
Plan 7.2 Plans of Godmanchester showing the development of major morphological features from Roman to late Medieval times.



Map 7.10 Godmanchester town centre c 1803 (detail from inclosure map)



Map 7.11 Godmanchester town centre, OS 1st edition, 1880



2. Later Civil Parishes Created around Single Townships

A number of townships, in existence by the twelfth century and originally chapelries within four larger parishes, became civil parishes in their own right during the course of the nineteenth century. The mother churches of these medieval ecclesiastical parishes were at the townships of Slepe (later St Ives), Paxton, Hartford, and Stanton (later Fenstanton) — all named in Domesday — see Table 7.2 (above). With the exception of Fenstanton these townships were originally either royal estates or held by the pre-Conquest church¹¹. By 1086 the large Saxon parish at Slepe had a chapel, which was most probably the one at Woodhurst (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 252). Hartford supported the Chapelry at Kings Ripton (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 209). Subsequently, by the end of the twelfth century the mother churches recorded by Domesday at Paxton (later Great Paxton) had chapelries at Little Paxton and Toseland (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 335, 375), whilst Stanton supported one at Hilton and Slepe a further chapel at Oldhurst (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 316 and 184). For these large medieval parishes with dependant chapelries a clear difference can be discerned between the development pattern of the capital townships and the settlements associated with the chapelries.

Many of these subsidiary settlements were associated with woodlands and forestlands at the time of Domesday — and in some cases until modern times. However, the woodland did not survive everywhere and settlements like Oldhurst and Woodhurst, despite their names, are now nearly devoid of woods and were so at the time of inclosure. Others, however, such as Little Paxton and Toseland retain residual elements of woodland. These

¹¹ Paxton (which included Little Paxton and Toseland) was held by the Confessor — although for only a short period; Hertford and Kings Ripton was royal demesne for much of the Middle Ages; Slepe, including the Hursts belonged to Ramsey Abbey (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 329, 207, 218 and 250).

settlements were situated at different points along the Ouse valley and their topography varies considerably.

Little Paxton, Toseland, Hilton, and Oldhurst had their own common fields (as recorded on their respective inclosure maps). Unfortunately the inclosure maps for Kings Ripton and Woodhurst have not survived so it is more difficult to judge the disposition of their common fields. In most cases the inclosure maps for these parishes (as for the others in Huntingdonshire) distinguish between the allotments created by inclosure and older, existing enclosures.

The class of settlements discussed here is the result of the post-medieval breakdown of large, late Saxon parishes held together during the course of the Middle Ages by dominant ecclesiastical and tenurial arrangements. The principal townships (typically the only ones recorded by name in 1086) hosted the mother church with chapelries being established at the dependant hamlets, which had usually developed close to, or within, more heavily wooded country. Judging by the size and disposition of habitation at the time of inclosure, and given the circumstances of their topography, these subsidiary settlements represent a form of dispersed settlement in relationship to the principal townships to which they were originally attached. Eventually, as feudal tenure relaxed and with the establishment of civil parishes many of these chapelries also became ecclesiastically independent from their mother church. With the growth of the rural population from the latter part of the eighteenth century, these hamlets took on the role of villages in their own right.

The Paxtons and Toseland [Plate 7.7]

In Great Paxton at inclosure (1811) habitation was clustered around a series of lanes south of the church, with associated small enclosures Map 7.12 (HRO: PM 3/15), a pattern also recorded by St. John's College farm plan of 1792 Map 7.13 (HRO: PM 6/8). Great Paxton's common fields were arranged around the village centre, accessed by a series of minor lanes and, with the exception of a small area of closes on the parish's boundary with Offord Darcy to the north, farm holdings were in strips scattered amongst the fields. The modern village has been further developed along the St Neots to Huntingdon road, often infilling between the older houses as elsewhere in the district. There are also a number of modern estates that have been built over what were previously open fields. Local buff brick is the dominant building material in the centre of the village (occasionally lime-washed) with a number of older, rendered cottages (some possibly timber-framed). see Plate 7.7

Toseland to the east was quite different in nature to Great Paxton even prior to inclosure. Some of the Toseland furlongs were to be found within the Great Paxton fields — a relic of the close relationship that both places had enjoyed in their early history when they, together with Little Paxton, were part of the same estate. The chapel at Toseland stood upon an oblong green that was orientated east/west with the township's farmsteads scattered untidily in its vicinity and along the lane to Yelling. The township chapel was built in the middle of the southern edge of the green, with at least three of the older timber-framed farmhouses surviving around the edge of the green, which is now enclosed and obscured from the road by later buildings. See Plate 7.7

A further lane led northwards to Toseland Wood, within which is a

large homestead moat (CCC HER ref. 01045). In 1811 there were still large parts of the three common fields unenclosed, but much of the land had been subject to earlier enclosure. Some around the green and along the Yelling Road were rectangular and possibly originally open field strips, but to the south at Black Hills and to the north in the vicinity of Wood Field the existing enclosures were larger and more irregular, resonant of assarting.

The River Ouse separates Little Paxton from Great Paxton, but a ferry connected the two townships until modern times¹². The eastern part of Little Paxton parish is low lying, bounded on the east and south by the Ouse and to the west by a tributary stream. Recent archaeological investigation has discovered evidence of intense settlement in the Roman and Late Saxon periods (CCC HER ref. 00600/01; 00622/28; 00633). Knowledge of earlier settlement patterns is better here as a result of rescue archaeology ahead of gravel extraction near to the river. The Cambridgeshire HER shows that intensive settlement occurred throughout the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley from at least the Iron Age. For many places, such as Little Paxton, gravel extraction has changed the local topography, effectively converting much of the low-lying land to water and forming a barrier between the existing habitation centres and the river itself.

In 1812, the main cluster of habitation at Little Paxton was on this low-lying land to the east of the Great North Road in the vicinity of the Late Saxon settlement on the river gravels, Map 7.14 (HRO: PM 3/16). However, along the lanes that spread out from here to the river, the common fields and the rather isolated western side of the parish, the farmsteads and homesteads were rather more dispersed. There were three open fields at the

¹² A lane leads down to the river from Great Paxton village and the ferry supposedly worked from there. On the Little Paxton side there is a triangular patch of land that is still part of Great Paxton Parish and may mark the landfall for this ferry. The VCH records the ferry as still operating in the twentieth century (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 332)

time of inclosure and the existing closes in this part of the parish were, as at Great Paxton, tightly bound to the buildings they served. To the west, beyond the site of Wood Field are Paxton Wood and (further west still) Meagre Wood, now in Hail Weston parish. This is an area of old enclosures within which is located Meagre Farm, also possibly a moated site.

Little Paxton is now very much built up with modern housing estates, so that the form of the village shown in the inclosure map is very difficult to discern. There is still the occasional timber-framed building (often rendered and sometimes thatched), as well as the local buff brick buildings that became the normal style from about the seventeenth century. (See Plate 7.7)

The evidence suggests that the Paxton estate recorded in 1086 would have had settlements on both sides of the Ouse, with the mother church on the eastern side at what was to become Great Paxton. Both Paxtons had clustered habitation, and that by the late eighteenth century Great Paxton was quite nucleated. To the east of Great Paxton, and to the west of Little Paxton there is evidence of early woodlands (Domesday Paxton's woodland was extensive for Huntingdonshire (Morris & Harvey [eds.] 1975, 20,8) and Toseland's morphology suggests a woodland clearing type settlement (see Oldhurst and Woodhurst, below), although at some point it acquired a fairly standard three/four-field system. All three townships had their regular field systems, but they existed alongside elements of more dispersed settlement and ancient wood pasture.

Plate 7. 7 Great and Little Paxton, and Toseland Today



Great Paxton High Street



Toseland Wood



Toseland chapel, towards a green edge farmstead



Great Paxton Church of the Holy Trinity

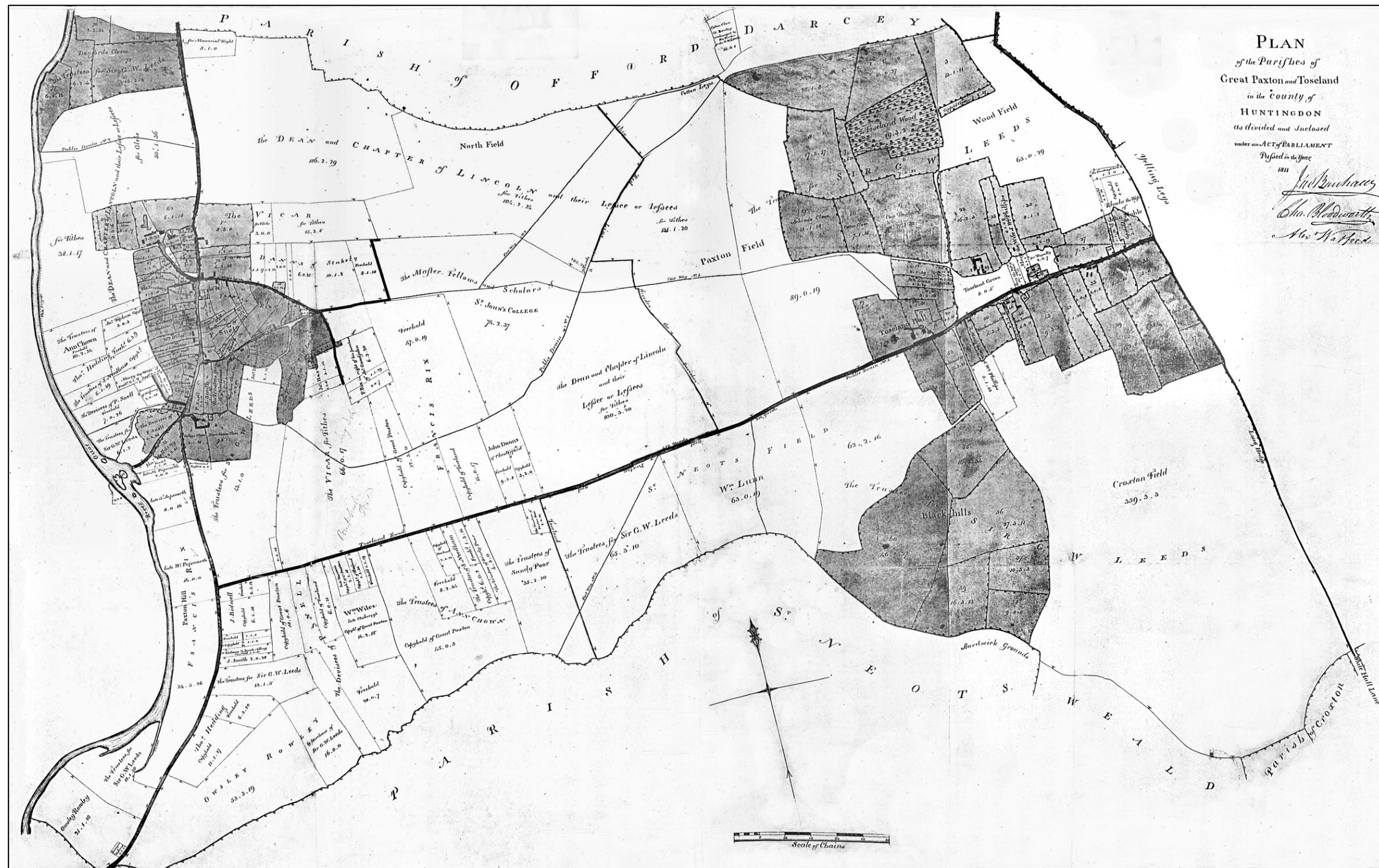


Little Paxton village street

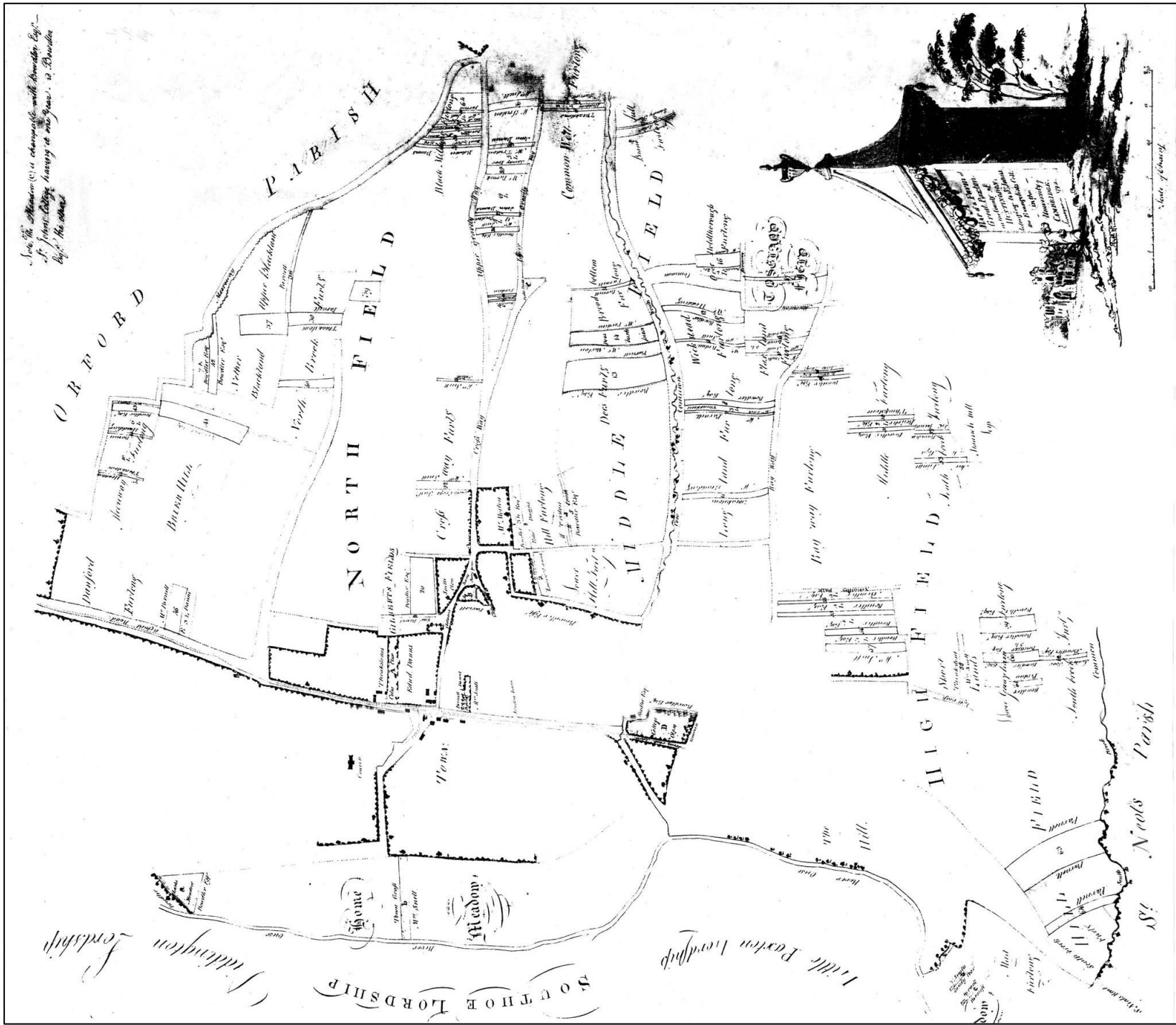


Little Paxton wood

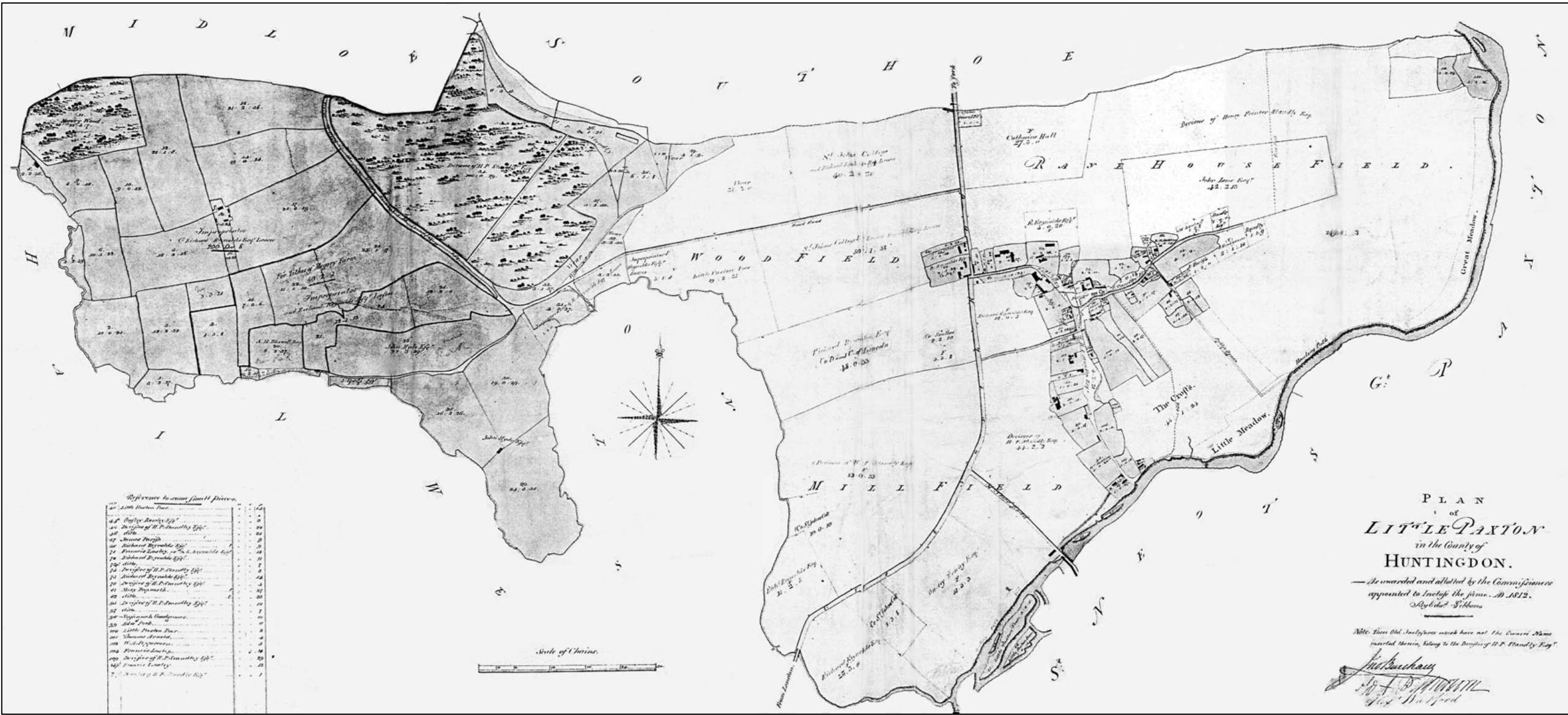
Map 7.12 Great Paxton Inclosure Map 1811



Map 7.13 Great Paxton St John's College, Cambridge farm plan 1792



Map 7.14 Little Paxton inclosure map 1812



Hartford and Kings Ripton [Plate 7.8]

Hartford was another Domesday township near the Ouse and its fields stretched north on rising ground to Sapley Forest, situated on a ridge in excess of 40 metres in height. The main village street (now part of a conservation area) was by-passed in the twentieth century as part of a road improvement scheme. This has isolated the parish church and the riverside meadows from the centre of the village. Furthermore, extensive modern housing development has further obscured the earlier morphology and affected the character of the settlement. The village buildings are typical of other Huntingdonshire settlements with a heterogeneous collection of styles from late medieval timber-framed dwellings to the buff and red brick buildings dating from the seventeenth century and later. Before the modern development the settlement form would have been loose grained, but this has been compromised by later infilling.

Hartford's habitation, at the time of inclosure in 1772, was clustered along the Huntingdon to St Ives road with the church situated near the banks of the Ouse at one corner of what may originally have been the green (but by 1771 was enclosed). This part of the parish also had a number of earlier enclosures, Map 7.15 (HRO: PM 2/18). The exception was Hartford Hill farm in the northeast quarter of the parish, which stood within its own fields, but the exact date of enclosure for these is unknown. Otherwise, the township lands were still open, although partially divided by hedges that seem to occur where blocks of land held by major landowners met (HRO ACC 223; Earl of Sandwich Estate plan 1757, HRO: ACC 223). The inclosure map does not include the Sapley Grounds, which was in 1771 still extra-parochial, having previously been part of an extensive network of medieval forestland in this part of Huntingdonshire (Page et al [eds.] 1974b,

172).

On the reverse slope above Hartford is Kings Ripton, originally a Chapelry in the ecclesiastical parish of Hartford (the second church recorded at Hartford in Domesday). Both settlements were royal demesne in 1086 and continued to be so for some time afterwards (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 207-209). Kings Ripton lay within what had originally been a heavily wooded track of country. Kingesho Wood, 100 acres in extent and the last major woodland within the settlement, was assarted by the Abbot of Ramsey by the late twelfth century (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 209). Hartford demonstrates the typical relationship of a Huntingdonshire Ouse valley township with its dependent hamlets in the hinterland beyond. The same pattern can be traced at Paxton (see above), Slepe, Eynesbury, and Eaton Socon (see below).

Plate 7. 8 Hartford Today



Hartford manorial site



Approaching Hartford from Huntingdon on the new road: church is off to the right, main village street off to the left

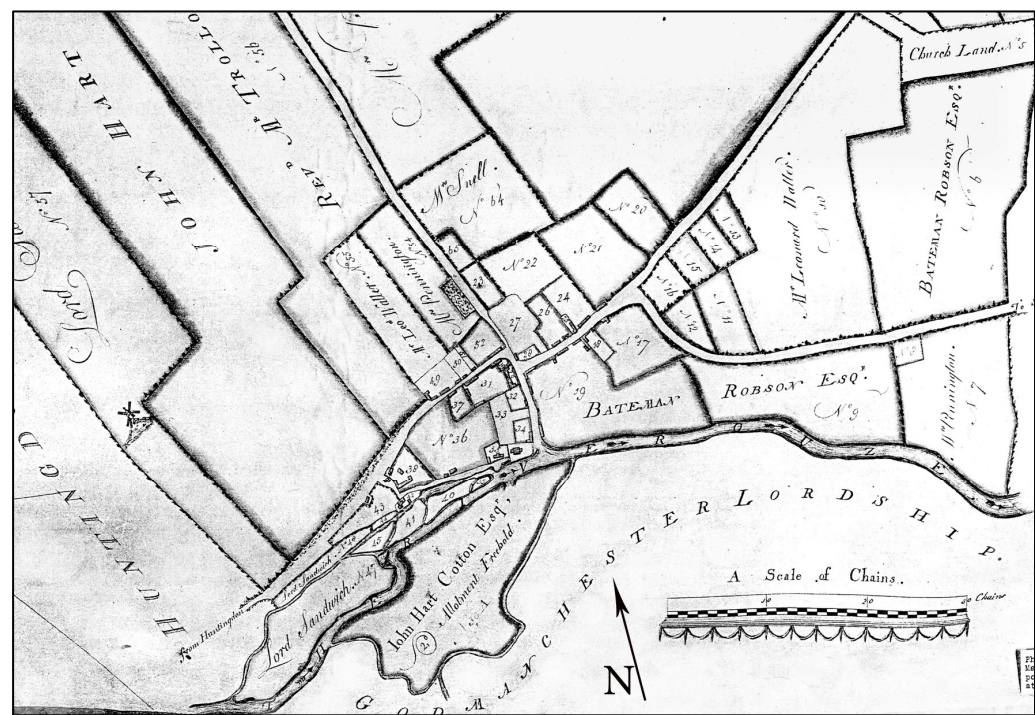


Hartford meadows, looking towards the River Great Ouse



Hartford principal street

Map 7.15 Hartford inclosure map 1771 -- detail



St Ives (Slepe), Oldhurst and Woodhurst [Plates 7.9 and 7.10]

Slepe was the name of the original Saxon settlement and the name St Ives was not formally adopted for the town until 1874. The relationship between Slepe and the Hursts is interesting, but its character is difficult to fully ascertain. In the Middle Ages, although all three townships were geographically adjacent, the townships were not contiguous. They were, however, related tenurially and ecclesiastically. The Manor and township of Slepe was granted to Ramsey Abbey in the tenth century, including the area later identified with the hamlets of Oldhurst and Woodhurst (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 218).

Slepe was on a crossing point of the Great Ouse and in the late tenth century became the location for the priory of St Ivo (a daughter house of Ramsey Abbey). Henry I granted the great St Ives Fair to the monks in 1110 (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 210-211). A map of 1728 by Edmund Pettis Maps 7.16a and b (HRO: M188) gives a detailed view of the parish and town of St Ives¹³. Pettis illustrated the buildings of the old township of Slepe with its parish church, and immediately to the east the planned medieval town situated around the fairground. North from this dense area of habitation up to the road from Huntingdon to Ely, Pettis shows that this was an area of town closes in what once must have been common fields¹⁴. What is noticeable is the complexity of these early enclosures and the way that permanently enclosed fields are differentiated from the furlongs in the common fields — the earliest representation of furlong boundaries in this part of Huntingdonshire. North of Wigan Brook, Pettis' map shows a few

¹³ Clearly by this date the Hursts were no longer part of the parish of Slepe and the name St Ives was unofficially being used to refer to the "town". St Ives was formally adopted as the name of the town when it received its borough status in 1874 (Page *et al* [eds.] 1974b, 210).

¹⁴ This is evidenced on the ground by the ridge and furrow still extant in Warners Park, marked on Pettis' map as Cow Close and Brick Kiln Close.

enclosures on Somersham Heath beyond, which by 1808 was comprehensively inclosed (see the inclosure map of 1808, Map 7.17 [HRO: PM 4/3]). St Ives was a highly nucleated settlement from the Middle Ages, with a close association and dependency on the river from which it gained its prosperity.

The town is low lying with views out across the river to the meadows of Hemingford Grey to the south¹⁵. There is a clear distinction in settlement form between the old village of Slepe, the later town that grew up around the medieval fair ground, the nineteenth and early twentieth century expansion, and the modern development. The plan form of the earlier village around the parish church consists of a sinuous street leading down to the riverside, with irregular plots and many of the buildings reflecting the settlement's agricultural past. The area of the medieval town has a clearly defined open market (some of which has subsequently been built upon) with a continuous back of pavement building line behind which curtilages reflect the typical medieval burgage plots. As the town expanded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries many of the surrounding town closes were built up (Plan 7.3). Later twentieth century development introduced a new morphology that was imposed systematically onto the town plan.

North of St Ives the land rises beyond Wigan Brook to a ridge in excess of 35 metres, upon which are situated the medieval hamlets of Oldhurst and Woodhurst. During the course of the Middle Ages Oldhurst and Woodhurst were held by Ramsey Abbey, although let out to lay lords. By the end of the twelfth century chapels existed at both places. However, the morphology of each place is quite different with a more organic appearance to Oldhurst, where habitation has grown up along a series of

¹⁵ The strength of this visual connection led to the inclusion of the meadows into the town's the conservation area in 1980.

lanes where the road from Warboys to Huntingdon meets the road from Chatteris. The plan of the hamlet on the inclosure map of 1803 shows a distinctive curvilinear edge to the habitation area, rather in the manner of a park or forest pale (although there is no suggestion of actual emparkment here) Map 7.18 (HRO: PM 3/11). Even today the settlement pattern is dispersed around a central island of open land, and mainly comprised of a number of farmsteads and associated cottages.

Woodhurst, one and a half kilometres to the southeast, has a more formal rectangular plan along the axis of the road from Earith and Bluntisham to a junction with the Huntingdon to Warboys road just south of Oldhurst, Map 7.19 (estate map 1865 HRO: 194). Thus Woodhurst looks like a planned intervention with the creation of a large green around which the farmsteads and homesteads of the settlement were initially situated. Part of this putative green is still not built up (though now enclosed). There is a distinctive front street and back lane similar to the one at Holywell, with which it shares a similar settlement plan. There are a number of late medieval timber-framed and thatched farmhouses surviving at intervals around the original green. See Plate 7.10

Plate 7. 9 St Ives Today



Ridge and furrow in Warner's Park



Village of Slepe



Late nineteenth century housing,
Needingworth Road



Medieval fair ground, St Ives



Spire of Slepe church of All Saints from St
Ives bridge



St Ives waterfront from the town bridge

Plate 7. 10 Oldhurst and Woodhurst Today



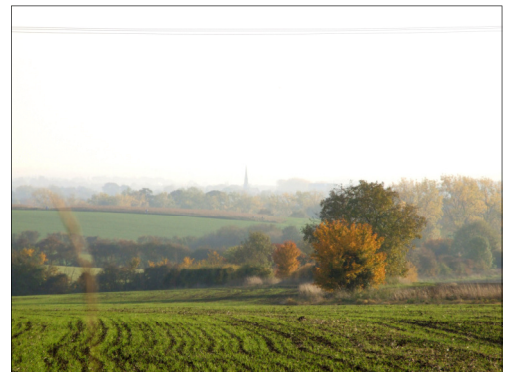
Enclosed green at Woodhurst



Cottages and village pond at Woodhurst



High Street at Woodhurst, green edge settlement



Looking over Woodhurst fields towards St Ives

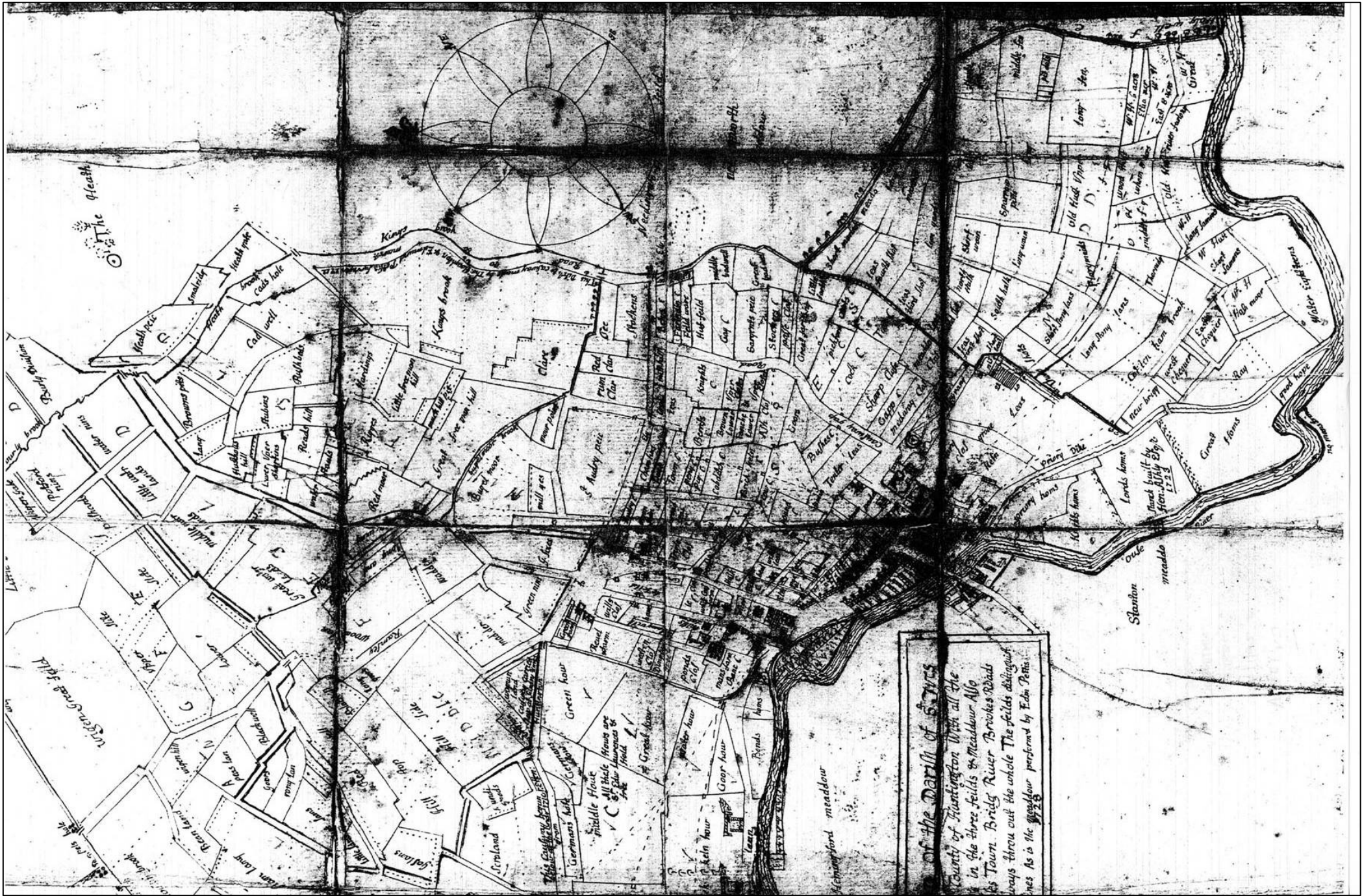


Looking south east over the backlands at Oldhurst

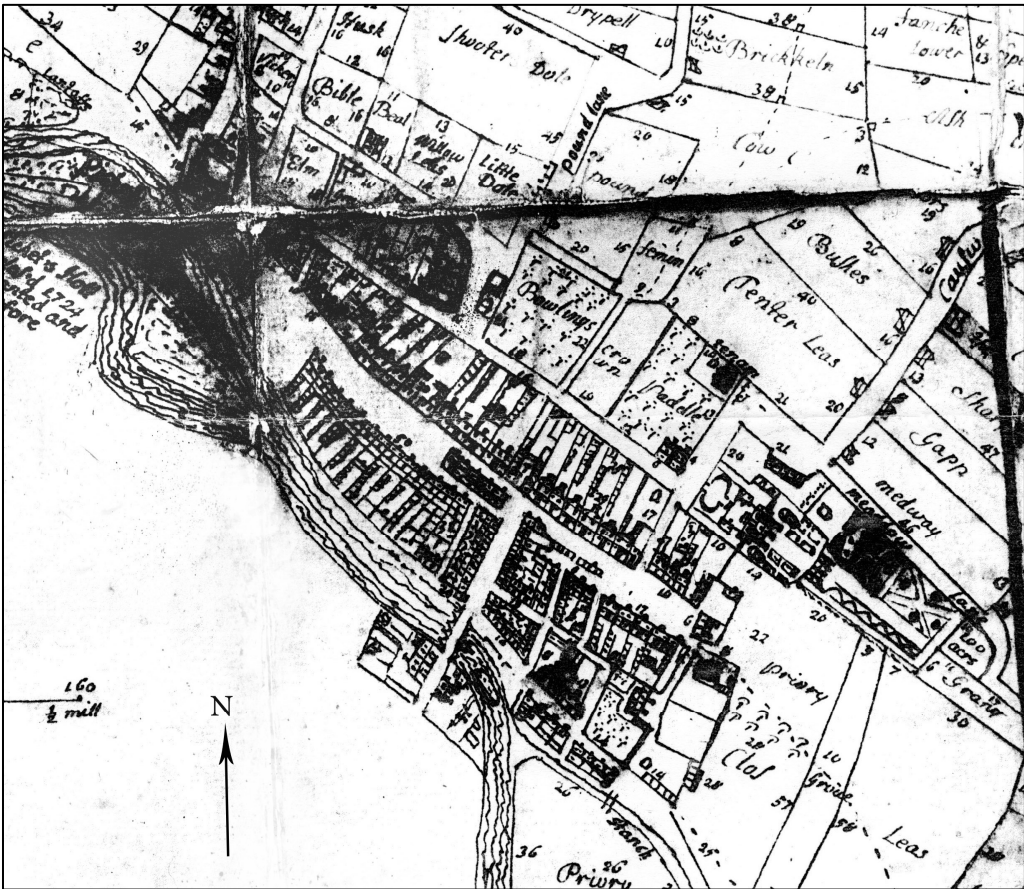


Church Farm at Oldhurst

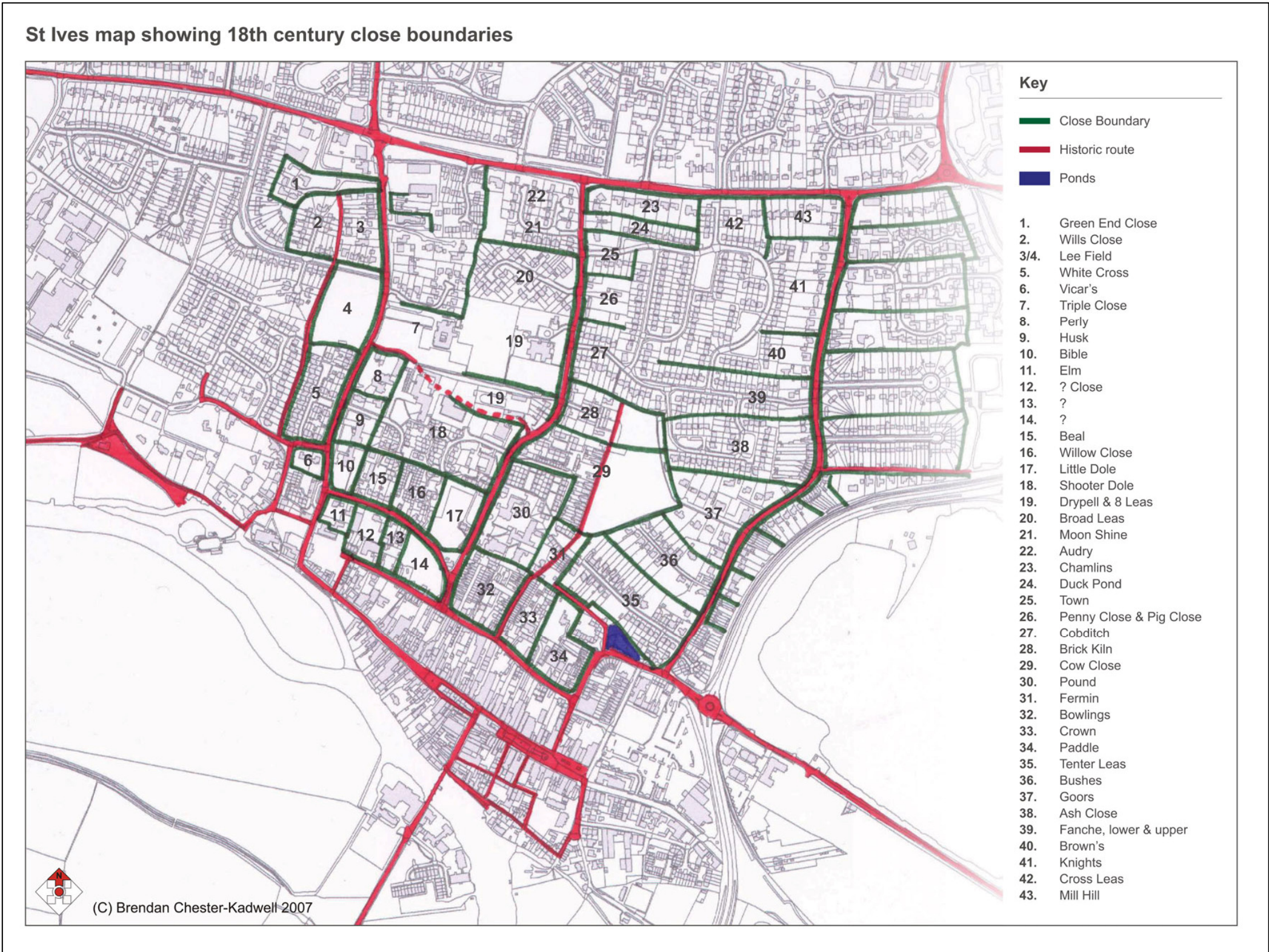
Map 7.16a St Ives: Edward Pettis' map 1725



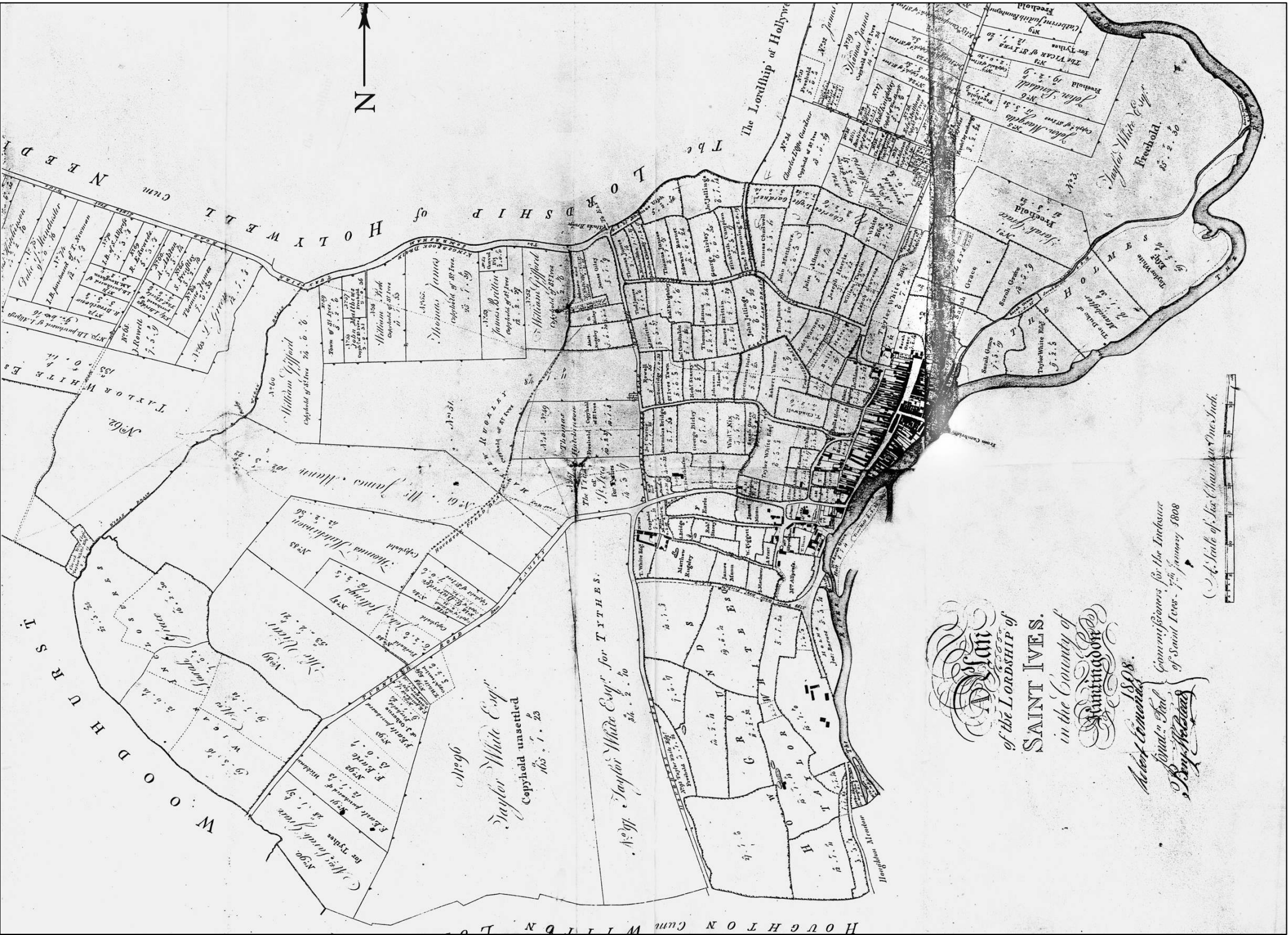
Map 7.16b St Ives: Edward Pettis' map 1725 -- detail



Plan 7.3 St Ives: modern OS map with relict eighteenth century close boundaries



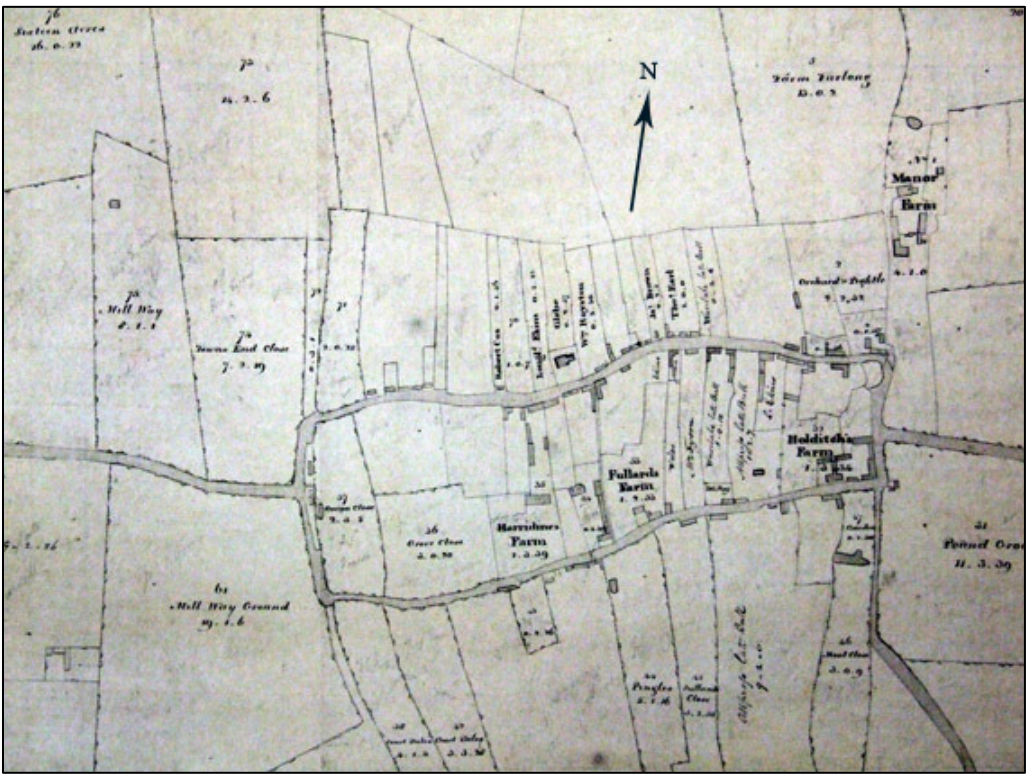
Map 7.17 St Ives' inclosure map 1808



Map 7.18 Old Hurst inclosure map 1803 -- detail



Map 7.19 Woodhurst: Sir Henry Pelly's Estate 1865 -- detail



Fenstanton and Hilton [Plate 7.11]

Further to the southeast where the Great Ouse enters the flatter lands of the fens are the associated settlements of Stanton (now Fenstanton) and Hilton. According to the CAM HER, both Fenstanton and Hilton have archaeological evidence of settlement from Neolithic times through Late Saxon to medieval, including a series of moats (two at Hilton with more fragmentary evidence of multiple moated sites at Fenstanton). The morphology of both settlements, as described below, suggests an early history of dispersed settlement.

Fenstanton, recorded as a township in 1086, is built upon a rise in land on the fen edge above the 10-metre contour to the north of the Huntingdon to Cambridge road. It possessed an exceptionally large green, which is now mostly cultivated. The principal habitation is on the rising ground to the east of this green around the manorial site and the parish church, see Plate 7.11. The earliest map is a manorial plan of 1777 that shows some scattered homesteads on the green's western flank as well, and the archaeological evidence suggests that there has been a widely scattered settlement pattern around the green since Saxon times (CCC HER ref. CB 15451, 10393, 04355, 03524, 03489, 01083/4), Map 7.20 (HRO: Map 47). This map also shows the limits of the common fields and the furlong boundaries — many of which are irregular and small — as well as the then existing closes associated with the township itself.

The Inclosure map of 1810 illustrates the extent to which the meandering waterways and drainage channels, the highways and byways had been improved, straightened and pacified by the engineers and surveyors of the early nineteenth century, but the general morphology of the settlement had been maintained Map 7.21 (HRO: PM 2/7). Fenstanton has a

very distinctive morphology, more akin to the green side settlements of southeast Cambridgeshire than others along the Huntingdonshire Ouse valley (Oosthuizen 2002a, 73-89; 2002b, 110-115).

At Hilton, about 3 kilometres to the south, the settlement pattern was repeated — albeit on a smaller scale on higher land (generally above 15 metres) and without the associations with the river and the fen. Here, yet again is the ample green with the farmsteads and homesteads set about it in an irregular fashion, see Plate 7.11. A plan of Hilton village drawn up for Capability Brown¹⁶ in 1778, Map 7.22 (HRO: Map187) is similar in all its essentials to that shown in the tithe award of 1839 Map 7.23 (HRO: 2196/24A)¹⁷.

¹⁶ Capability Brown had an interest in the area and lived at The Groves, Fenstanton (CCC HER ref. 11972).

¹⁷ Rather unusually for Huntingdonshire, there is a separate tithe award and inclosure award (map dated 1840).

Plate 7. 11 Fenstanton and Hilton Today



Fenstanton village street



Fenstanton church of St Peter and St Paul
across the old green

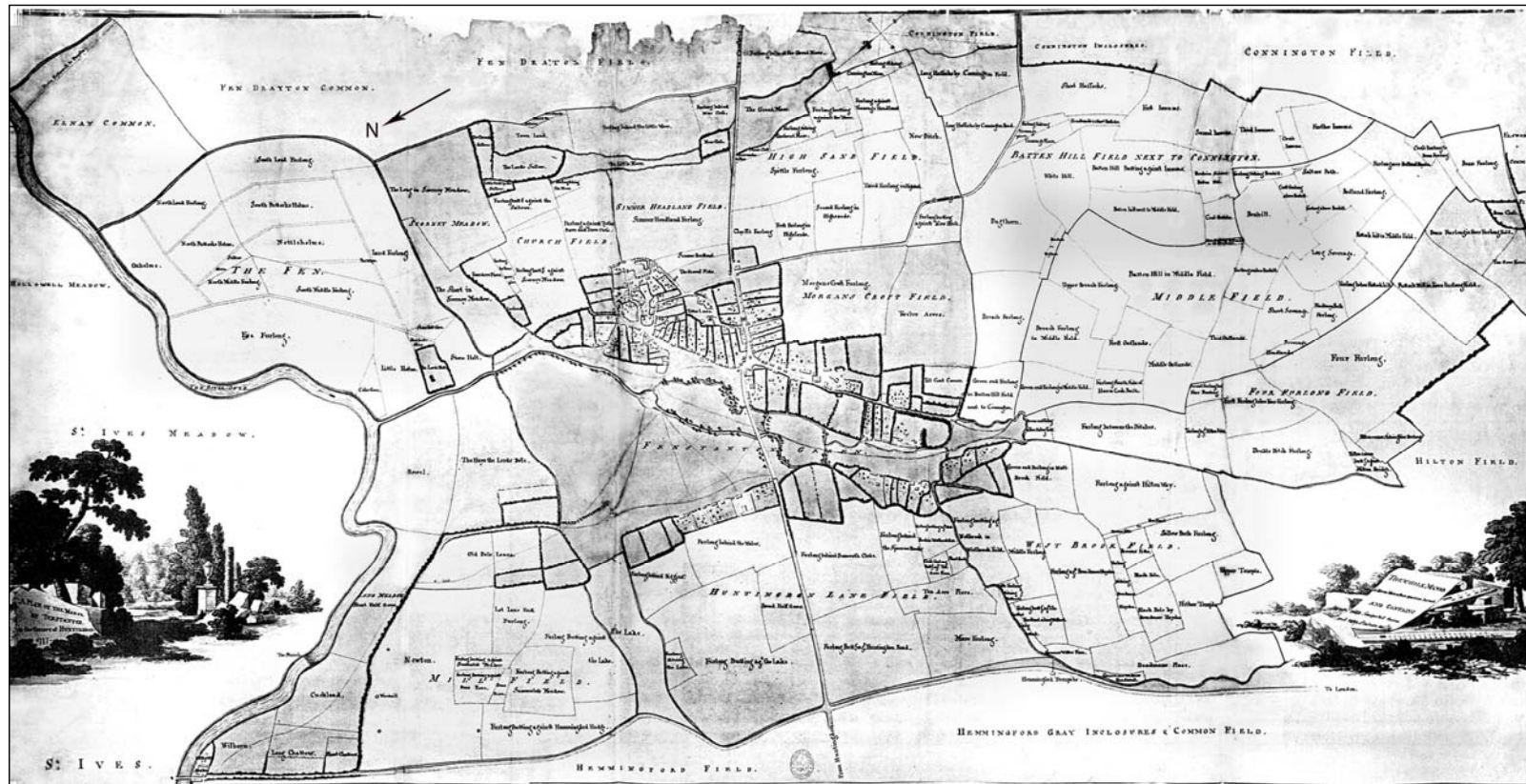


Hilton manor

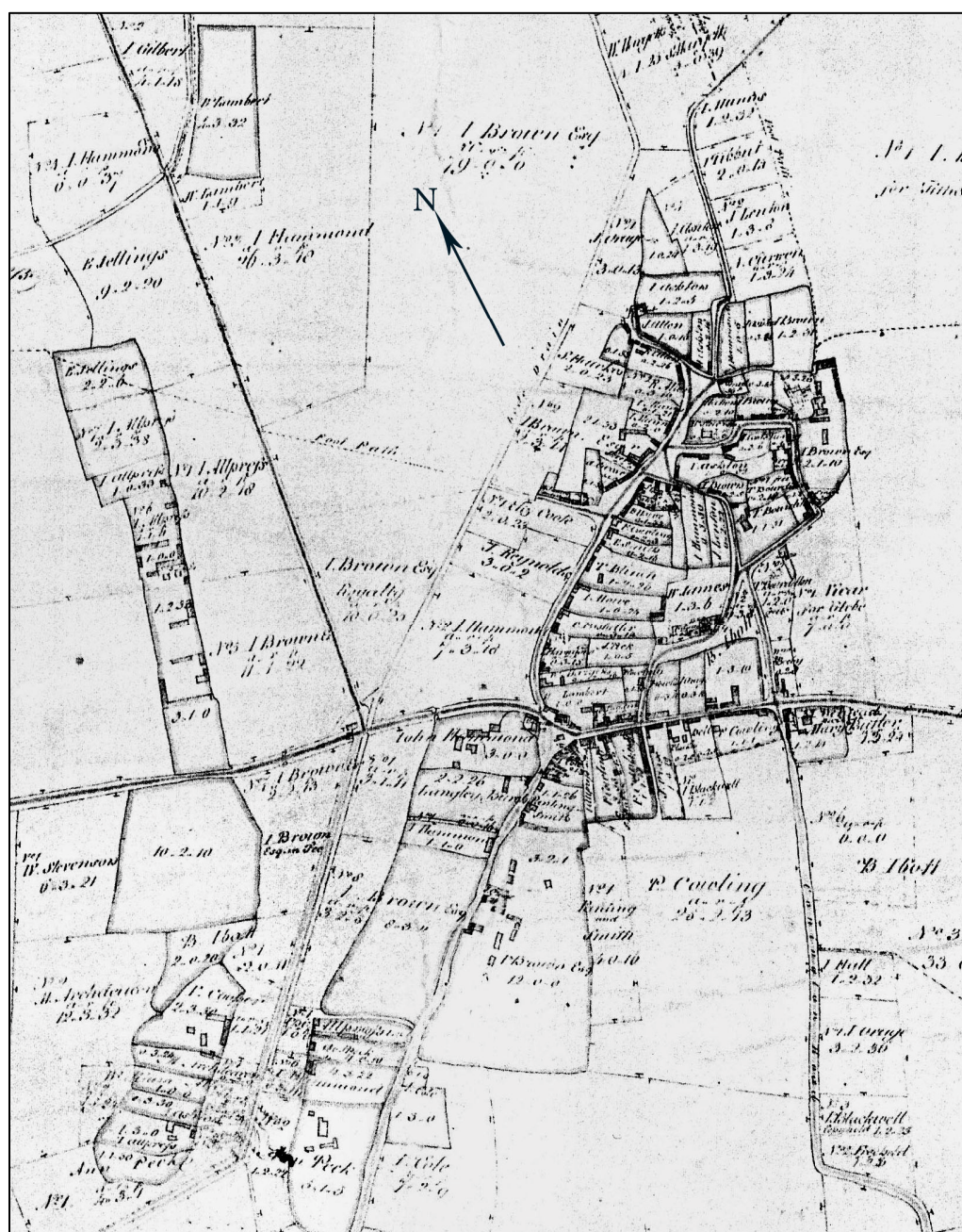


Hilton green

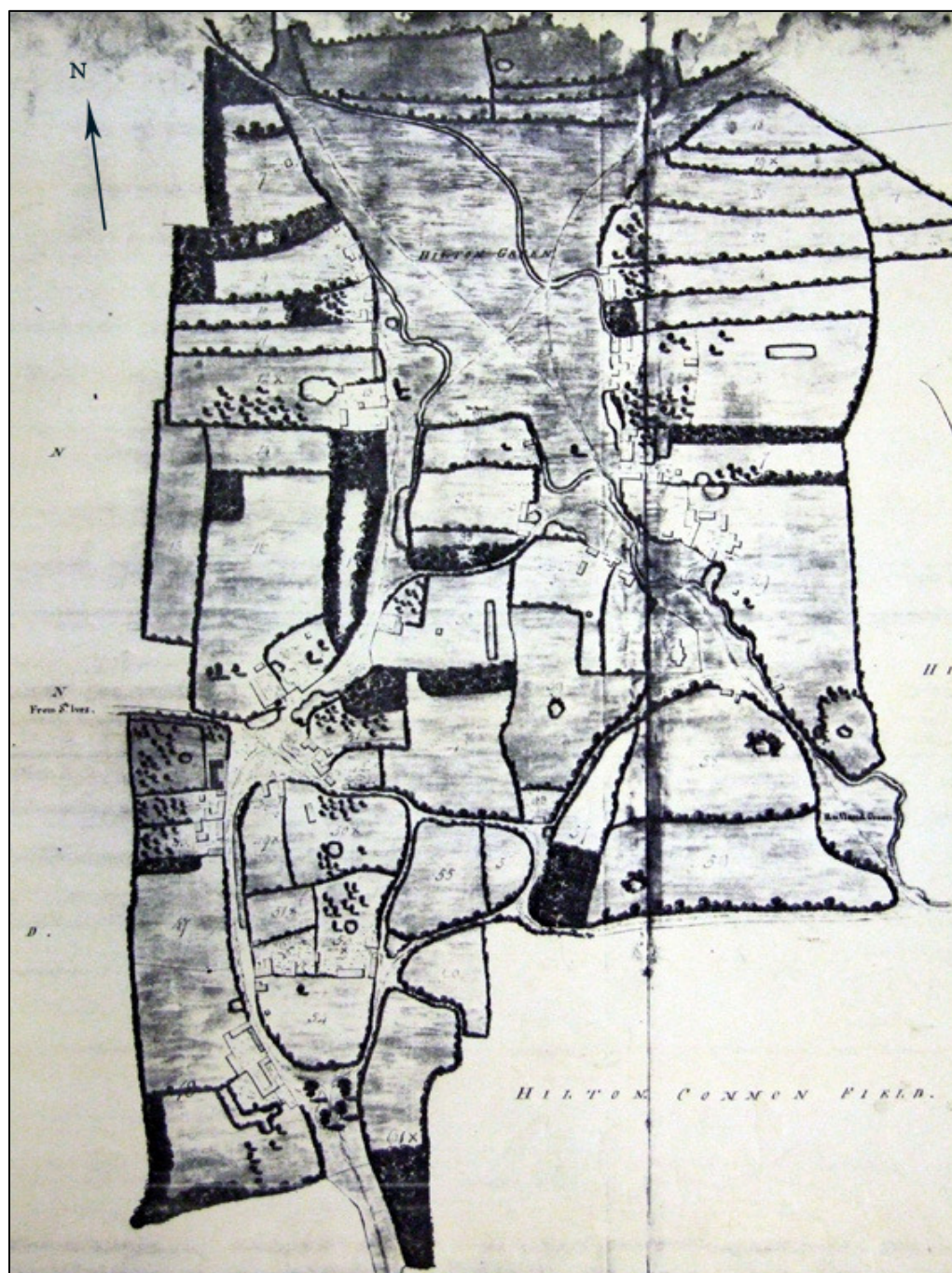
Map 7.20 Fenstanton Manorial Plan 1777



Map 7.21 Fenstanton inclosure map 1810 -- detail



Map 7.22 Hilton village plan 1778



Map 7.23 Hilton Tithe Map 1839 – detail



3a. Medieval Parishes with Complex Settlement Patterns into Modern Times

There were a number of large medieval ecclesiastical parishes with complex settlement patterns and topography that retained their territorial integrity into modern times. Some like Eynesbury and St Neots were extensive medieval ecclesiastical parishes that had similar settlement morphologies to the other parishes considered here, but without the fen/forest topography¹⁸. These parishes were largely reorganised by the local government reforms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and form a group on their own (see below). Others, like Brampton, Buckden, and Holywell-cum-Needlingworth have survived as civil parishes largely unchanged in area to this day; whilst Bluntisham-cum-Earith was divided into two civil parishes during the course of the twentieth century. The latter parishes (all Domesday vills) commonly had significant elements of underdeveloped land resources, such as fenland or heath, some of which were part of the extensive Huntingdonshire forest complex in the Middle Ages. This section examines Holywell-cum-Needlingworth and Bluntisham-cum-Earith (fen edge settlements), as well as Buckden and Brampton (woodland edge settlements).

Holywell-cum-Needlingworth & Bluntisham-cum-Earith¹⁹[Plates 7.12, 7.13]

Holywell-cum-Needlingworth and Bluntisham-cum-Earith²⁰ are neighbouring parishes at the eastern boundary of Huntingdonshire where

¹⁸ Although Eynesbury and St. Neots were the product of fission during the course of the twelfth century the resulting parishes were still large, complex ones that were otherwise comparable with the parishes discussed here.

¹⁹ Holywell, Needlingworth, Bluntisham and Earith are four separate townships closely linked through their parish and tenurial structures.

²⁰ For the purposes of this analysis the boundaries of this parish are the ones in existence prior to the twentieth century division into two civil parishes.

the Ouse leaves the old county. Both parishes share a very specific and varied topography being situated at the end of a ridge of land declining to the east that runs approximately east to west a few kilometres north of the river Ouse — a continuation of the ridge upon which stands Old Hurst and Woodhurst. The westernmost part of Bluntisham crests this ridge where it is about 30 metres above OD, whilst Needingworth lies on a spur to the south at about 10 metres. The surface geology is boulder clay on the higher land with alluvium below 5 metres where the fen occurs. All four settlements are built predominantly on terraces of river gravels above the fen. Needingworth and Bluntisham situated above the 10 metre contour on rising ground, whilst Earith and Holywell are situated close to the Ouse above the 5 metre contour. Thus, both parishes have a share of upland clay lands and fen and it is this combination that strongly characterised these four settlements in the Middle Ages.

At the time of Domesday the area was well wooded with significant reserves of meadowland (Morris and Harvey [eds.] 1975, 4,2; 6,10; 6,6). However, between then and the implementation of Parliamentary Inclosure (1800 — 1814) there were extensive changes in land use in both parishes, where extensive areas of heath were also recorded. In 1086 there were churches at the townships of Holywell and Bluntisham (neither Needingworth nor Earith are mentioned separately in Domesday). The Abbot of Ramsey held Holywell until the Dissolution in 1539. Ely Abbey held Bluntisham (which included Earith) until the creation of the See of Ely in 1108, when the bishop retained lands at Earith (together with the advowson of the church), but granted Bluntisham manor to the Abbey (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 154-5 & 157). Thus, throughout the Middle Ages both of these parishes were under the ultimate control of powerful

churchmen.

It appears that the lands owned by Ramsey Abbey (Holywell-cum-Needingworth, but also Woodhurst and Oldhurst) were cleared of woodland and heath at an earlier date than those held by Ely (Bluntisham-cum-Earith and the neighbouring lordship of Somersham to the north, where the bishop of Ely had a palace). At Holywell-cum-Needingworth the inclosure map of 1800 shows that there was by then none of the Domesday wood extant and that Needingworth Heath was largely, if not completely, converted to arable; this is reinforced by a plan of the Duke of Manchester's estate drawn in 1764. At Bluntisham, on the other hand, there were still extensive woods shown on the enclosure map of 1814, Map 7.24 (HRO PM1/7) and it is known that as late as 1843 there were still 68 acres left — now all gone (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 153). Also, Bluntisham Heath was finally enclosed at that time and a new road set out across it. The chief reason for this divergence of development between the two parishes was the existence of Somersham Forest within which, from 1147, the bishops of Ely were granted the right of free chase between Kings Ripton and Warboys in the west to Bluntisham in the east (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 226). Alongside the remaining woodland, the 1814 inclosure map shows evidence of earlier assarting. This is a feature missing from Holywell-cum-Needingworth, where by 1800 most of the open ground above the fen had been incorporated into the common open fields (as indeed had happened at Woodhurst, suggesting that its land had been cleared with the laying out of common fields earlier in the Middle Ages).

The disposition of habitation in both parishes appears to have been influenced by similar considerations, notably the availability of lighter soils over gravel deposits, which were favoured against the more difficult terrain

of the heavily wooded claylands to the northwest and the then undrained fens to the south east. Both Needingworth and Bluntisham are situated on the main east to west route from Huntingdon and St Ives north of the Great Ouse to the crossing point at Earith. At Bluntisham route ways that connect the fen edge settlements from Ramsey with those towards Ely and Chatteris converge. At Needingworth the tenements were clustered irregularly around the junction of the St Ives to Bluntisham road with the spur road to Holywell, Map 7.25 (HRO PM2/23). The junction at Needingworth formed a small triangular green, which had at least been partly built upon by 1764 and irregular tenement plots also existed for about half a mile along the road to Bluntisham, Map 7.26 (HRO PM2/22) and see Plate 7.12. Similarly, at Bluntisham there was a roughly triangular green at the cross roads only partly enclosed by 1814, with a remnant still in the public domain today. The main village street runs south to the high road from St Ives to the river crossing at Earith and the inclosure map records regular tenement plots along its length with further habitation running west from the village crossroads towards Ramsey. Bluntisham parish church lies to the southeast of the village centre almost half way along the highway to Earith, making it accessible to both the communities it served. Its location suggests that at one time it may have marked the edge of an earlier green.

The Cambridgeshire fens to the east of these two parishes have been very influential on their settlement morphology. Holywell may have begun as a local access point to the river for Needingworth, as Earith almost certainly did for Bluntisham — Earith meaning ‘gravel hithe’ (Gelling & Cole 2000, 85-88). Earith continued to perform this function until the coming of the railways and the development of better road transport superseded the importance of river navigation during the course of the

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Earith (a medieval hamlet) had at the time of enclosure neat but narrow tenement plots and was then at its zenith as a river port at the junction of the Great Ouse and the New Bedford River (Lewis 1848, vol. ii 123). Today Earith is predominantly a settlement of buff brick buildings arranged principally as a continuous back of pavement street frontage on both sides of its main street. Its burgage type plots stretch back to the river to the south and an original back lane to the north (now much built up with modern dwellings).

Holywell was by the early modern period less well connected to the river, which by the fourteenth century had changed its course to the south, although there was still a ferry from Holywell to Fen Drayton in Cambridgeshire until the twentieth century (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 175). The parish church, together with its 'holy well' (from which the parish gets its name) is situated at the western end of the settlement and stands high above the level of the fen. The main street at Holywell, which is broadly aligned with the river, is called Holywell Front and is connected to a back lane to the north (actually called Back Lane!) by short side lanes as at Woodhurst. Regular tenements are shown along the north side of Holywell Front on the inclosure map of 1800, see Map 7.27. Today, these large properties set within spacious curtilages, many lime-washed, rendered and thatched, form an impressive street frontage on a natural platform above the level of the river. There are further plots containing seventeenth-century dwellings on the north side of Back Lane east of Mill Lane, the lane connecting Holywell to Needingworth. The presumption must be that the development along Back Lane is later, although the cottages here are of similar date to those along Holywell Front, the earliest being seventeenth century in both locations (Huntingdonshire District Council Register of

Listed Buildings). Back Lane today is a street developed on both sides as, in the late twentieth century, backlands adjoining the lane to the south (previously belonging to properties in Holywell Front) were developed for housing. (See Plate 7.12)

Plate 7. 1 2 Holywell and Needingworth Today



Holywell, seventeenth century development, north side of Back Lane



Holywell, twentieth century development south side of Back Lane



Holywell Front from the ferry



Holywell church of St John the Baptist, above the fen level



Needingworth High Street



Old course of the River Great Ouse, across Needingworth Fen

Plate 7. 13 Bluntisham and Earith Today



Bluntisham village centre



Bluntisham Baptist chapel with cemetery



Bluntisham and Earith parish church of St Mary



Earith High Street

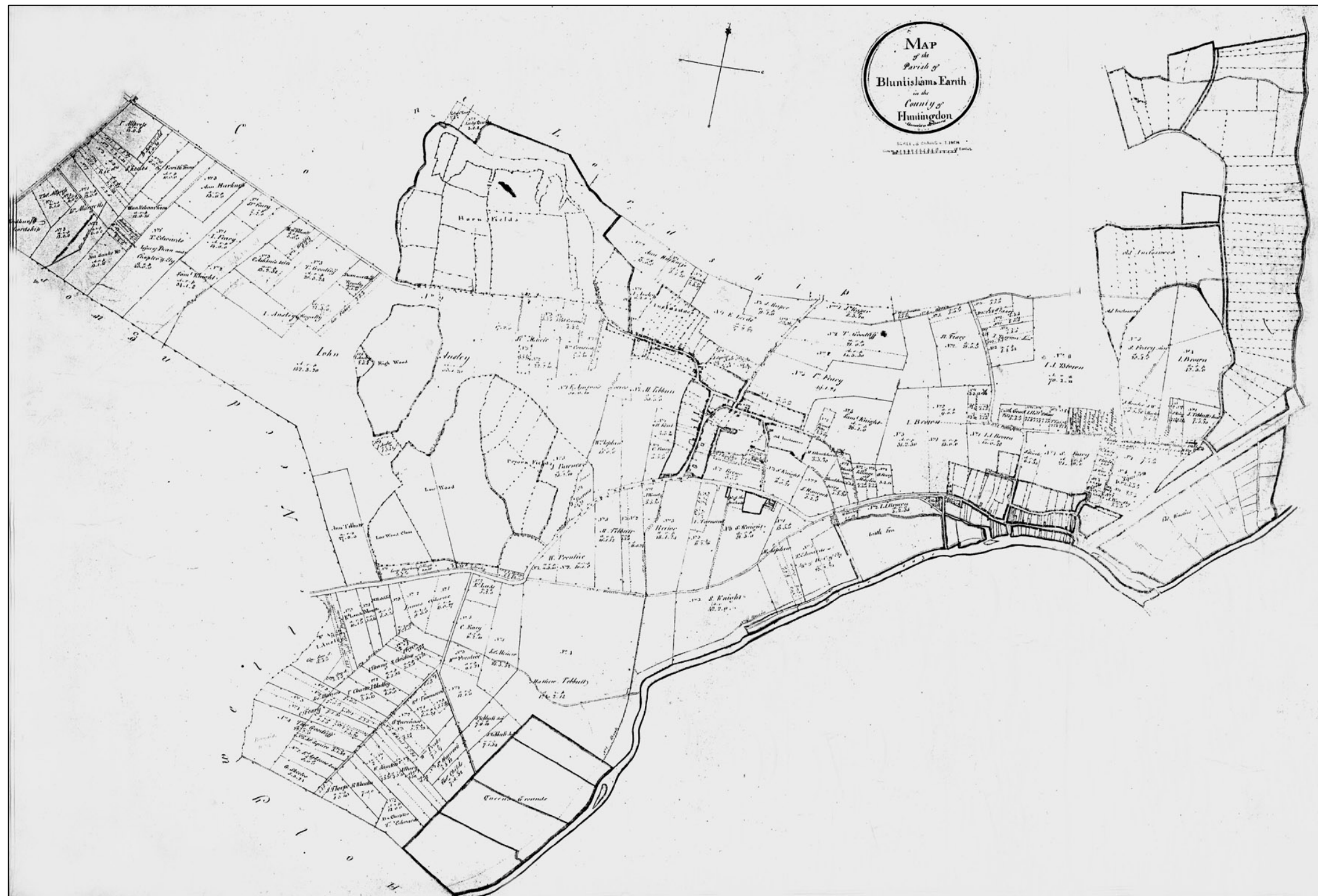


The Old Bedford river at Earith

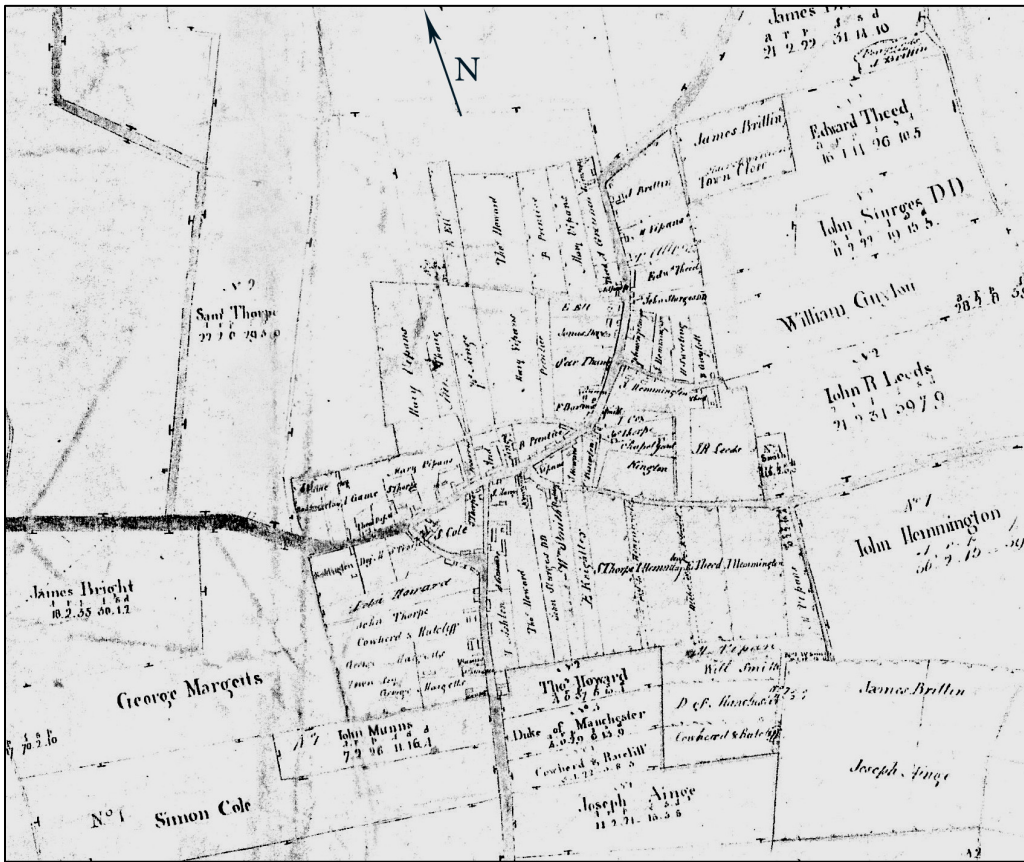


Bridge over the Old Bedford river at confluence with the River Great Ouse, Earith

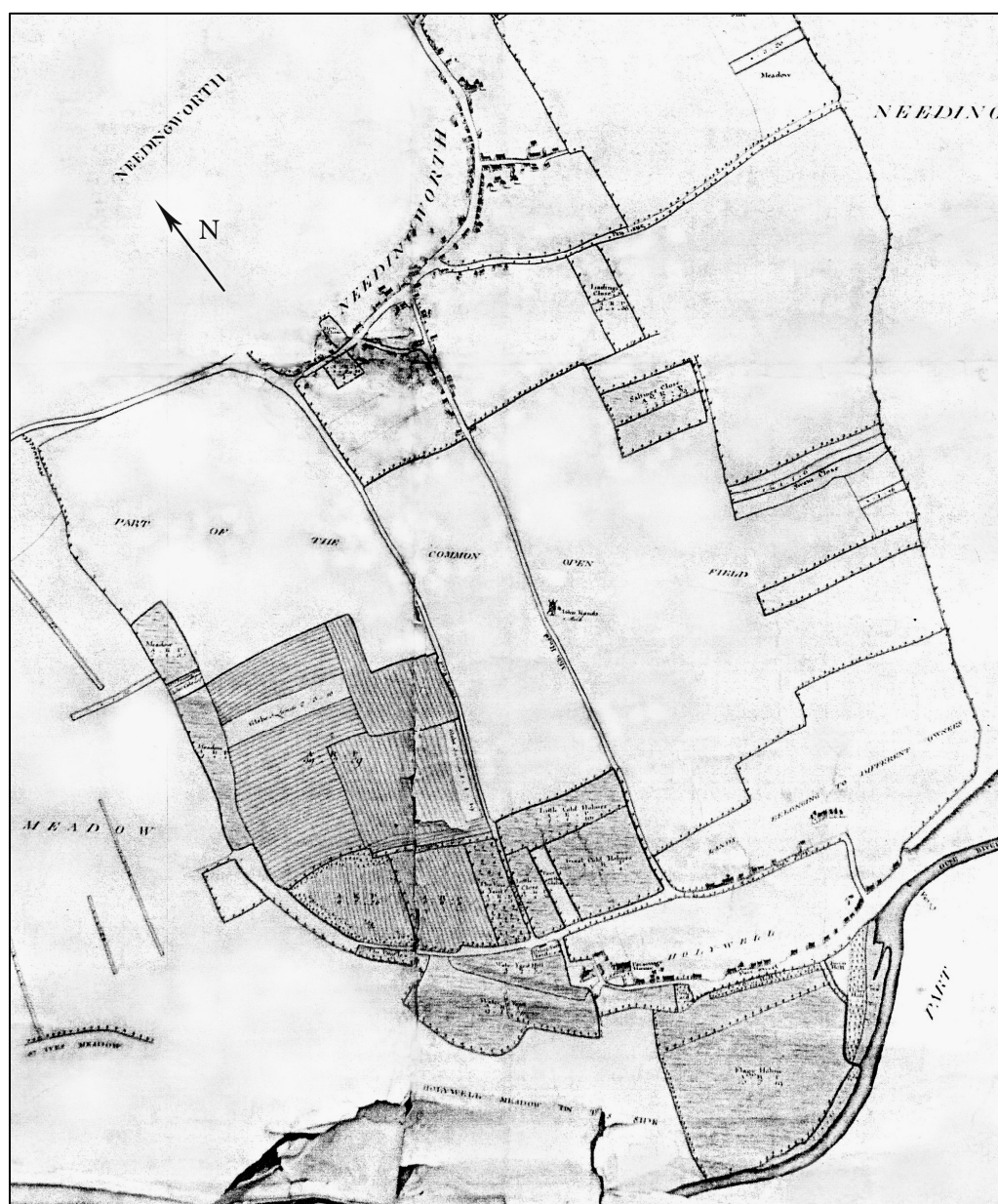
Map 7.24 Bluntisham cum Earith inclosure map 1814



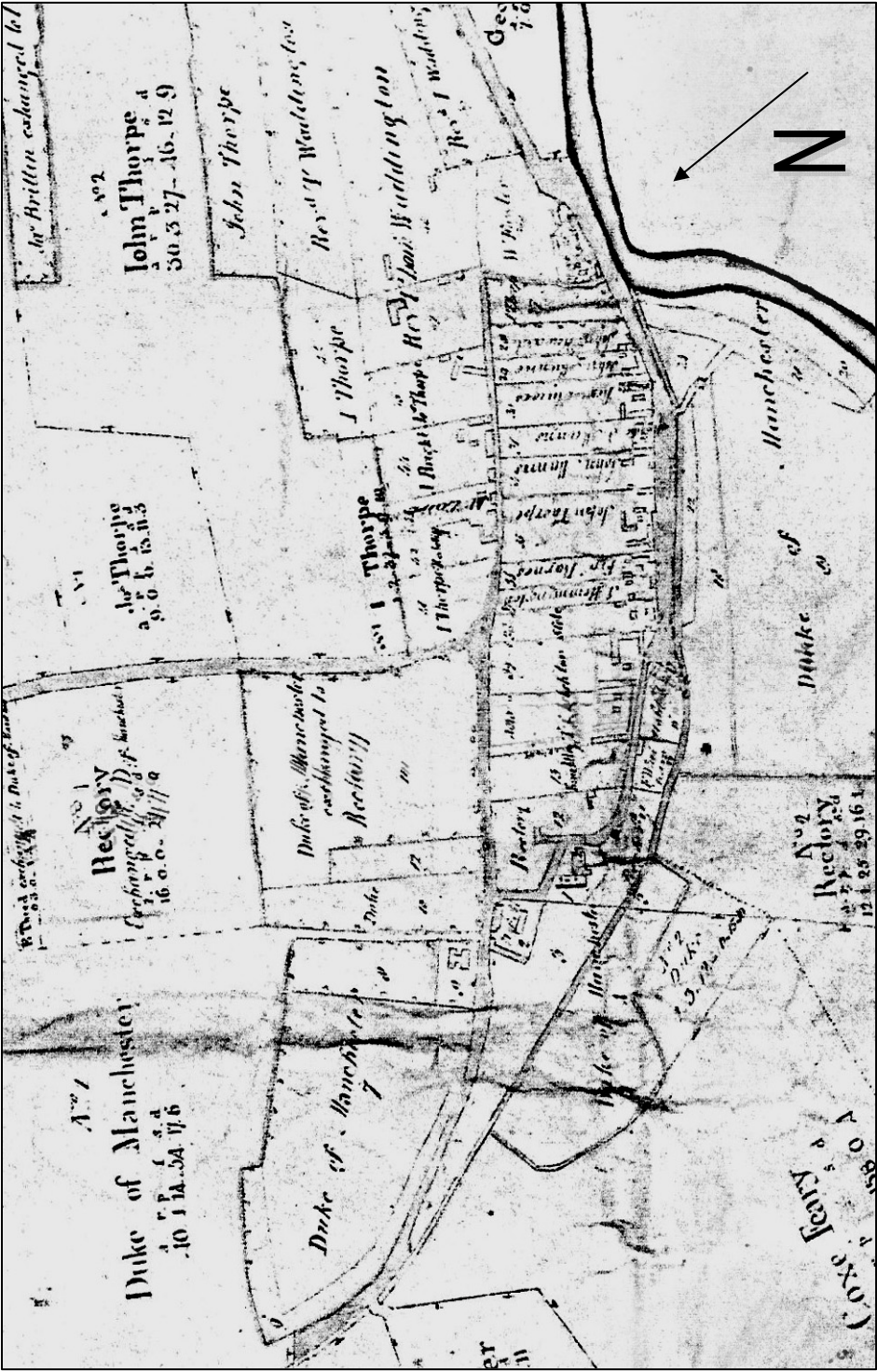
Map 7.25 Holywell-cum-Needlingworth inclosure map 1800 – detail of Needlingworth



Map 7.26 Holywell, Duke of Manchester's estate, 1764 -- detail



Map 7.27 Holywell-cum-Needingworth inclosure map 1800 – detail of Holywell



Brampton and Buckden [Plate 7.14]

Brampton and Buckden, neighbouring parishes on the west bank of the Ouse, share a similar topography with other Ouse Valley parishes on the west bank such as Diddington, Southoe, Little Paxton (all in Huntingdonshire) and Eaton Socon (Bedfordshire). These settlements have their principle centre of habitation on the gravel terraces of the Ouse with, to the west, a hinterland of gentle clay hills (boulder clay overlying Oxford clay) rising in places to over 50 metres. Brampton and Buckden, relatively large parishes, contained important estates held by the King and the Bishop of Lincoln respectively. As argued in Chapter 6, stability in the integrity of parish boundaries post-Conquest seemed to have been enhanced where there was one dominant landholder.

At Buckden the manor was not only held by the Bishop of Lincoln, but also held by him in demesne; furthermore, the bishop's ownership continued after the Reformation until the estate was taken over by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1858 (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 265). The bishops of Lincoln seem to have favoured Buckden as a residence from at least the twelfth century and were possibly also in residence at the time of Domesday (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 260)²¹. This continuity and the influence of its Episcopal owner greatly affected the way that the township and manor developed during the course of the Middle Ages. Various charters were obtained from a succession of kings that enabled the bishops to exploit the large area of woodland present in 1086 for assarting and the creation of parkland (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 264). By the time of inclosure in 1820 a sizeable portion of the parish was already enclosed around the areas of

²¹ Buckden was a convenient place for the bishops of Lincoln because it was midway between Lincoln and Westminster. Lincoln was a large diocese that stretched from Lincolnshire to Hertfordshire and Buckden was fairly central to the diocese and was close to the Great North Road.

habitation at Buckden itself, and the hamlets of Stirtloe²² and Hardwick. Further, earlier enclosures existed in the northwest quarter of the parish, where the remnants of woodland (now mostly gone) were situated together with the bishop's parkland, Map 7.28 (HRO: PM1/12, 1813). The nature of many of these enclosures, with their irregular boundaries and remnant shaws, is indicative of the assarting that we know occurred in the parish from twelfth and thirteenth century charters. Furthermore, an adjacent field to The Parks, not enclosed until Parliamentary inclosure, was called Stocking Field itself also suggestive of earlier woodland clearance²³. There are three sites within the general area of the assarted lands that have what may be homestead moats or other water features (CCC HER ref. 00673, 00533, 00534).

Today, Buckden is cut off from its hinterland by the dual carriageway of the A1 trunk road. The village itself has a long high street dominated by a number of coaching inns and the Tower, a late medieval brick building once owned by the Bishops of Lincoln. The parish church sits back from the main street. The size, shape and distribution of settlement curtilages are similar to those of agricultural settlements elsewhere in the Ouse Valley. There is now considerable modern housing development at Buckden. See Plate 7.14

In 1086, Brampton manor was Royal Demesne and remained so until 1194 (Page et al [eds.] 1974c, 13) — long enough to ensure that the parish did not divide during the period of greatest activity in the establishment of new townships in this part of Huntingdonshire. As at Buckden the western portion of the parish was very well wooded and a large part of this

22 The hamlet of Stirtloe was abandoned before the time of inclosure and its site included in the park of Stirtloe House (CCC HER ref. 11342).

23 This was a popular name for enclosures in once wooded areas (i.e. see Diddington and Midloe), but it is not always possible to know whether the names of these fields is actually ancient or not in many cases.

woodland in Brampton belonged to the Royal Forest of Herthay, which was possibly originally an element of Weybridge Forest (Page et al [eds.] 1974c, 16), itself part of a network of forest land including that of Somersham. It is not certain at what date parish boundaries within the forest were finally established, but it is likely that the existence of the forest prevented early assarting and new settlement. At inclosure in 1775 habitation existed along a series of lanes just south of the Huntingdon to Thrapston road. Map 7.29 (HRO: PM1/8, 1772). The built environment of the township of Brampton was strung out in a linear fashion, with some outliers suggesting that the medieval settlement may have been quite dispersed. Brampton is still polyfocal, despite what is now a more densely settled village envelope. To the west of the Great North Road was the hamlet of Houghton, which now no longer exists — probably deserted later in the Middle Ages (Page et al [eds.] 1974c, 13) but for which there is map evidence in 1772. The medieval manorial arable and pasture were on the river gravels below the 20-metre contour (coinciding with the outcropping of Oxford Clay), whilst meadows were on the alluvium nearest to the Ouse (including the great meadow of Port Holme). The woodlands were mostly on the boulder clay on the higher ground to the west. Brampton Wood was the manorial woodland and still exists as a major broadleaf wood (Page et al [eds.] 1974c, 16). See Plate 7.14

The evidence suggests that habitation in both Buckden and Brampton was more obviously dispersed in the Middle Ages, in common with the other parishes on the west bank. The migration of habitation sites towards the largest settlement seems to have been a slow process not complete until Early Modern times. Not all parishes followed this process of nucleation, and the next section looks at settlements that preserved their more dispersed pattern until very recently.

Plate 7. 14 Brampton and Buckden Today



Buckden Tower and parish church of St Mary



Buckden High Street, showing seventeenth century and eighteenth century coaching inns



Hamlet of Stirtloe



Brampton hamlet near parish church of St Mary Magdalen



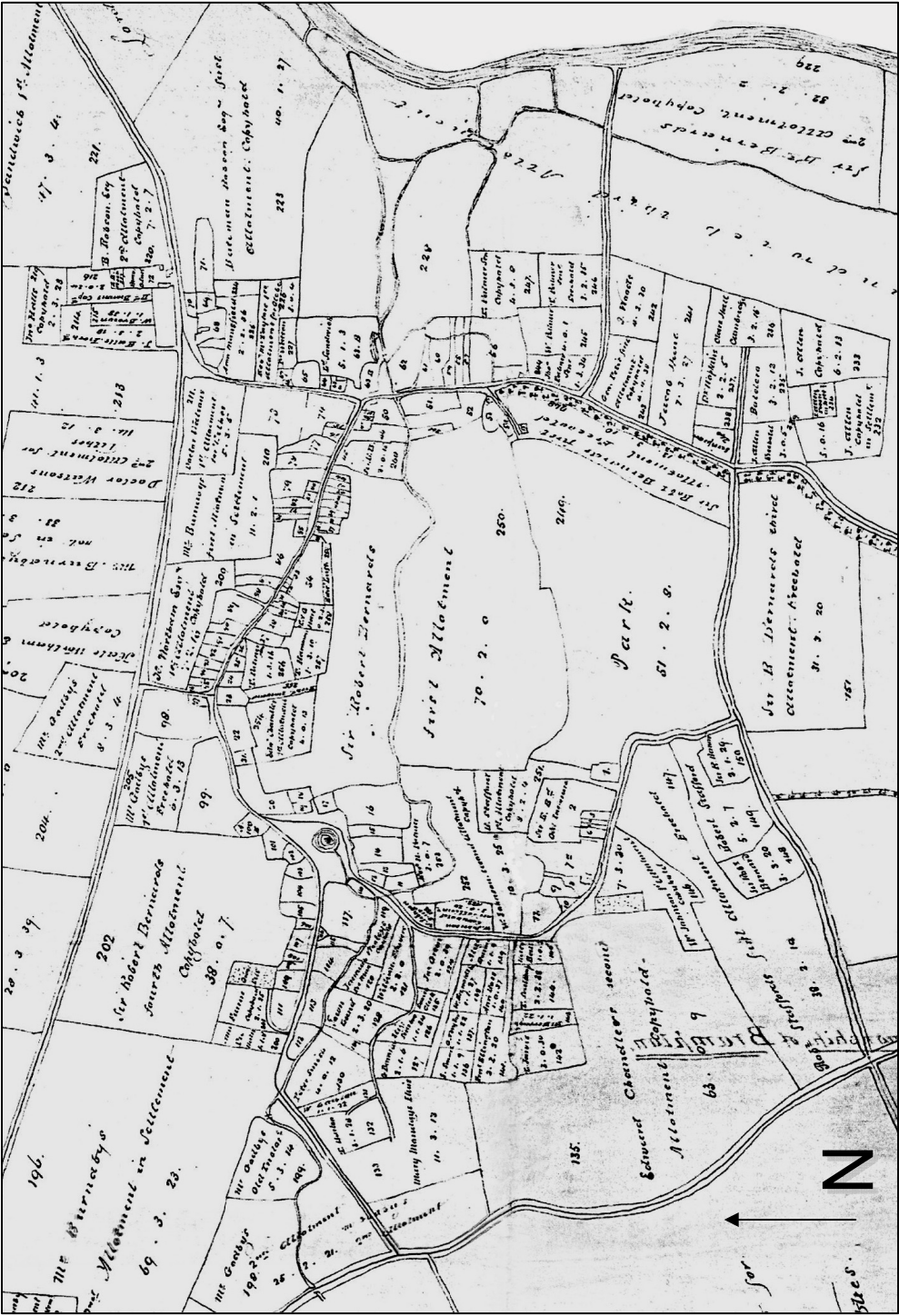
Brampton hamlet near village green



Brampton Woods across site of township fields

[illegible]

Map 7.29 Brampton inclosure map 1772



3b. Medieval Parishes with Dispersed Settlement Patterns

Diddington, Southoe, Midloe and Boughton [Plate 7.15]

Between Buckden to the north, and Little Paxton to the south, are situated the modern civil parishes of Diddington and Southoe-with-Midloe. Although Midloe is geographically and topographically related to Southoe and now forms one parish with it, throughout the Middle Ages it was an extra-parochial area in the hands of Warden Abbey, Bedfordshire. Within the area of these two medieval ecclesiastical parishes were three Domesday townships, Diddington, Southoe and Boughton (Morris and Harvey [eds.] 1975, 19,31; 2,3; 20,9; 19,29; 25,2). On the formation of Southoe and Diddington as separate parishes in the twelfth century the hamlet of Boughton was divided between the two; however, it continued as a separate manor until the eighteenth century, when it became joined to Southoe manor (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 351). There is also evidence for deserted medieval settlement at Boughton (CCC HER ref. 00642). All three townships had their own field systems, meadowlands and, for Southoe, woodlands²⁴.

The principle areas of habitation in these parishes occur south of the Church at Diddington and near the church at Southoe. Diddington was inclosed in 1799 and the inclosure map shows the extent of earlier piecemeal enclosures, the park hedge (which at the time was incomplete on the eastern edge) and the disposition of buildings within the parish, Map 7.30 (HRO: PM2/1a, 1797). A later estate map dated 1808 (HRO: LR6/319) and another dated 1859 (HRO: M193), even allowing for the displacement

²⁴ Woodlands for these parishes are a bit of an enigma. Domesday gives Southoe 58 acres of woodland, but none for Diddington or Boughton. However, by the time of Inclosure in 1797 Southoe woods were gone and Diddington had acquired one.

of settlement when the area around the church at Diddington was imparked, show that habitation was really more like hamlets than villages, with a dispersed pattern of farmsteads. Map 7.31. Since inclosure further farmsteads have emerged, as elsewhere in the Ouse valley.

Midloe, as noted above, was extra-parochial in the Middle Ages and became a grange of Warden Abbey (rented from Ramsey Abbey) with its own fields (there is still evidence of ridge and furrow near Midloe Grange Farm), augmented during the course of the twelfth and thirteenth century when permission was granted to assart Midloe wood (Page et al [eds.] 1974b, 318). For a short period after 1894 Midloe became a civil parish of only 881 acres, but was joined to Southoe later in the twentieth century. Midloe shares a dispersed settlement pattern with Diddington and Southoe.

The land within which these settlements are situated is more ubiquitously low-lying than elsewhere in this part of the Ouse valley. A series of lateral streams flow eastwards into the Ouse between Diddington Brook in the north and the valley of the tributary river Kim just to the south, which have created a flatter countryside. Extensive gravel workings between the settled areas and the river along the western floodplain of the Ouse have created a series of pools and lakes on what was once agricultural land. The experience is of a less rolling landscape, with habitation and the parish churches being more visible in the medium view.

Plate 7. 15 Diddington and Southoe Today



Southoe village street



Southoe church of St Leonard and cottages



View west from Southoe towards Midloe



Diddington Wood

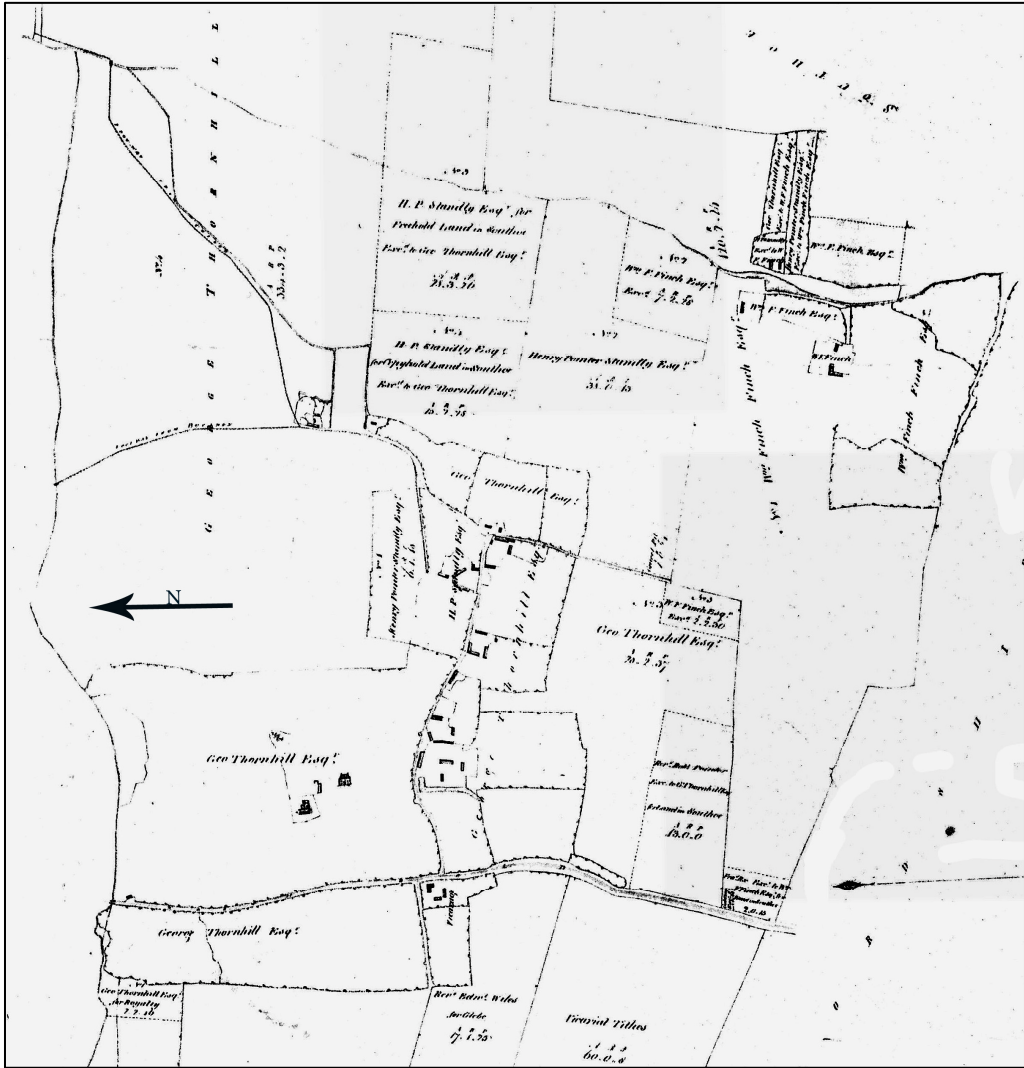


Diddington church of St Laurence across
parkland

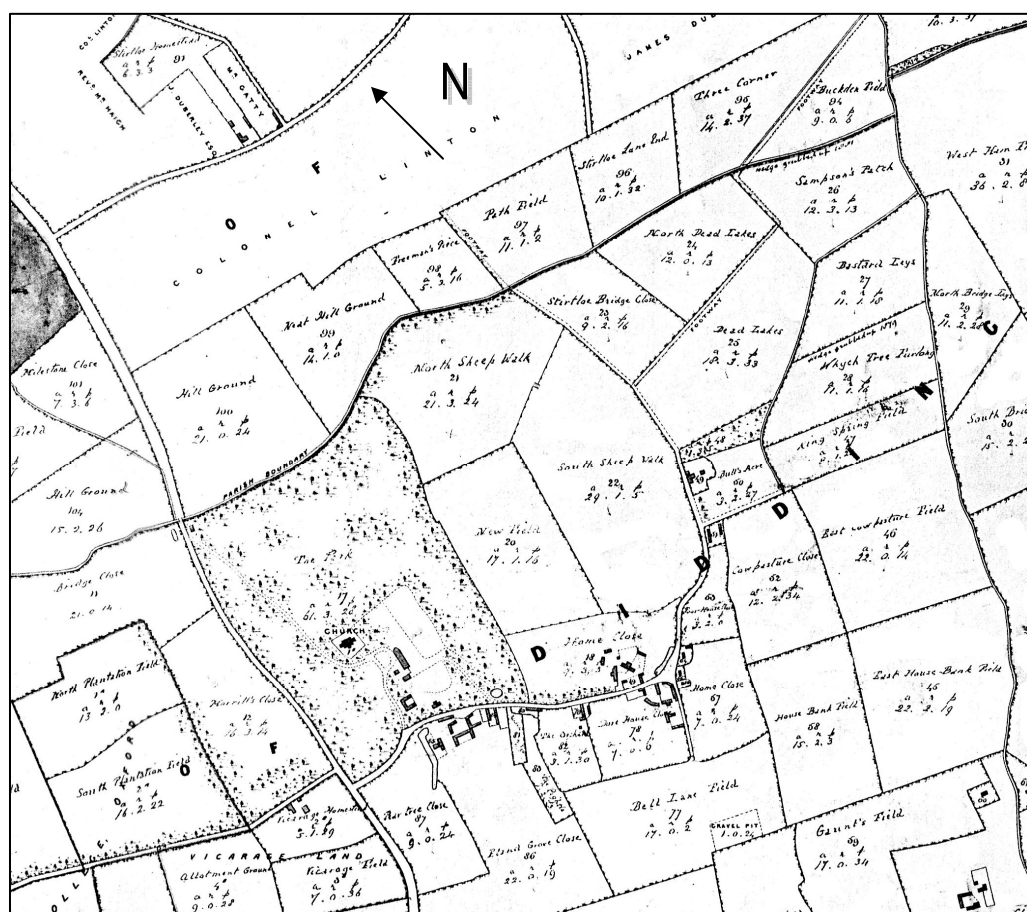


Dispersed settlement at Diddington

Map 7.30 Diddington inclosure map 1797



Map 7.31 Diddington estate map 1859 -- detail



Analysis of Settlement Patterns in the St. Neots District

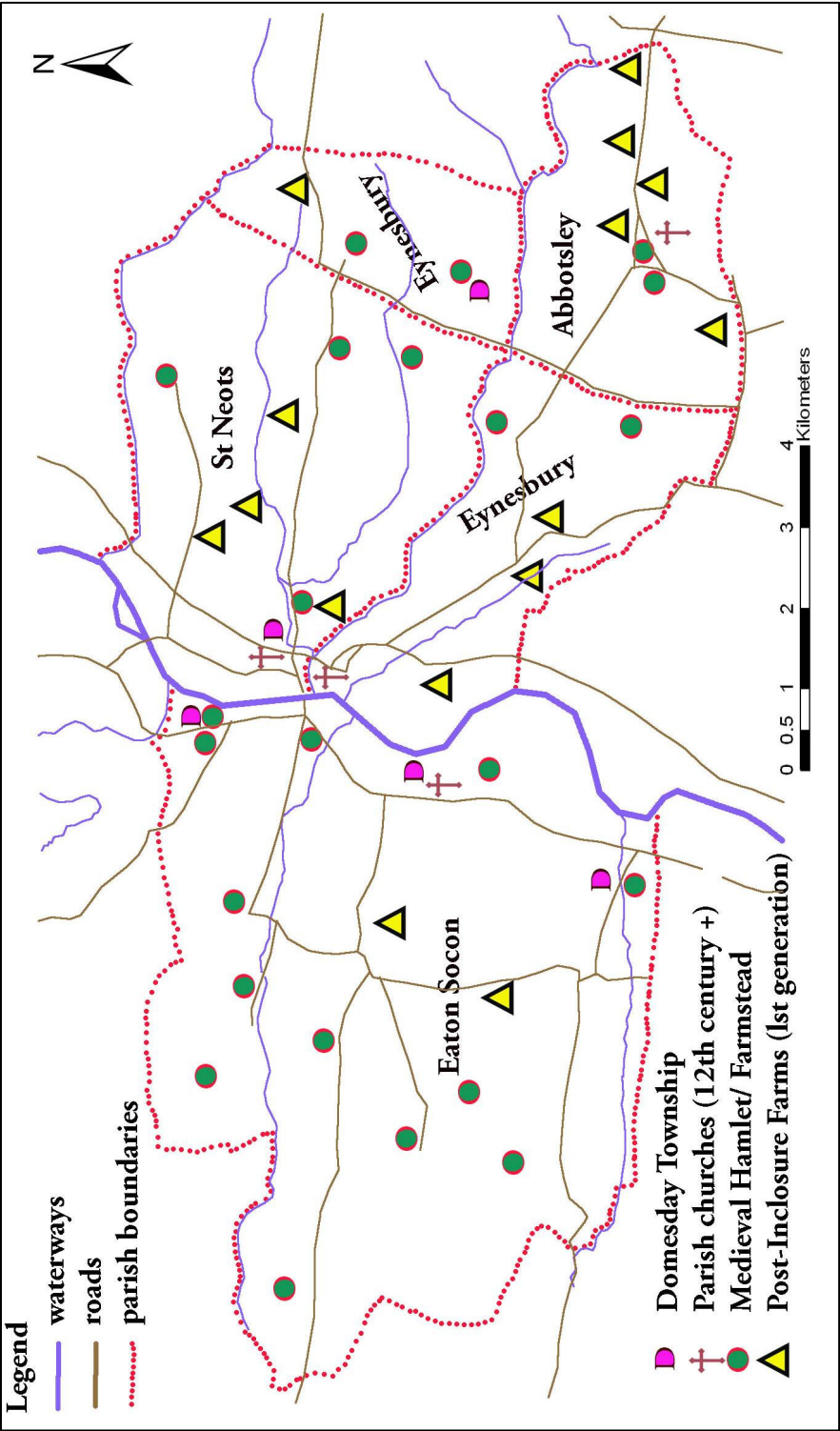
In Chapter 6 the formation of the modern town of St Neots from elements of the former civil and ecclesiastical parishes of Eynesbury, St Neots and Eaton Socon has been described in some detail. Together the three parishes form a block of topographically similar territory bisected by the river Great Ouse. As elsewhere in the Ouse Valley, larger clustered habitation is situated on the gravels above the river, whilst on the higher clay lands — furthest from the river — settlement is more dispersed. The complexity of the elements of the rural settlement pattern in the current district within which St Neots is situated is demonstrated in Table 7.3, and Plan 7.4. Comparison of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century map evidence shows that although the habitation that was clustered at the village centres tended to increase over time, by the nineteenth century the settlement pattern also appeared more dispersed, with the creation of post-inclosure farmsteads.

All three of the settlements that were later to be amalgamated into the twentieth century town of St Neots — Eaton Socon, Eynesbury and St Neots itself — were, by the end of the twelfth century, putatively newly created planned settlements on new sites. The settlement pattern of the hinterland of all three parishes, on the other hand, was broadly established pre-twelfth century and remained virtually unchanged until Inclosure, when further farmsteads were added to the landscape.

Table 7.3: Historic Settlement Pattern in the St Neots' District

PARISH AREAS	EYNESBURY	ABBOTSLEY	ST. NEOTS	EATON SOCON
TOWNSHIPS recorded in DOMESDAY	Eynesbury Caldecott			Eaton Socon Wyboston Sudbury
TOWNSHIP LOCATION OF PARISH CHURCHES (from 12 th Century)	Eynesbury	Abbotsley	St. Neots	Eaton Socon
MEDIEVAL HAMLETS/ FARMSTEADS	Caldecott Weald Lansbury Puttocks Hardwick	Manor Farm Lion Farm	Monks Hardwick Wintringham Lower Wintringham Green End	Wyboston Sudbury Honydon Upper & Lower Staploe Eaton Ford Little End Crosshall Bushmead Basmead Duloe Begwary Goodwich Cadbury Topham
POST-INCLOSURE FARMSTEADS	Parkers Farm Rectory Farm North Farm Eynesbury Fields Farm	Rectory Farm Southwood Farm Fen End Farm Thorness Farm Hill Top Farm	Manor Farm Loves Farm Priory Hill Tithe Farm	Little End Farm Field Farm Eaton Tithe Farm

Plan 7.4 Historic Settlement pattern in the St Neots' district



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Eaton Socon [Plate 7.16]

The pre-1964 parish of Eaton Socon (Bedfordshire) followed a typical pattern of settlement distribution with larger, nucleated settlements near the river and more dispersed habitation situated inland. The principle settlements of Eaton Socon and Wyboston (both Domesday townships) were located on the eastern side of the parish, on the second and third terrace gravels above the 15 metre contour. The township of Eaton Socon, as its name implies, was free from the hundred court during the Middle Ages and as the most significant settlement gave its name to this diverse and extensive parish. The archaeological evidence is that a Late Saxon settlement was near the river, under the site of the twelfth century castle at Eaton Socon (now marked by a series of earthworks), consisting of houses and a church (CCC HER ref. 00374/74a; Lethbridge 1952, 48-60; Addyman 1965, 38-73). The building of the castle extinguished the habitation associated with this earlier settlement about 1140, at which time the inhabitants seem to have been moved to the present site of Eaton Socon. This suggests that the replacement village was planned and indeed the form, scale and layout of the village are similar to other likely planned villages elsewhere along the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley such as Eynesbury and Hemingford Grey.

Before inclosure, Eaton's and Wyboston's common fields stretched to the west, away from the river on rising ground. Beyond them were a number of hamlets and farmsteads on terrain that reaches nearly 70 metres in the northwest of the parish. At parliamentary inclosure the western part of the parish was still wooded with a network of small fields, many of which were probably medieval assarts, complemented by a few isolated common fields. These small common fields are similar to others associated with clayland hamlets in the district; for example, in the parishes of Eynesbury

and St Neots where the evidence has been found at the sites of medieval hamlets (see Chapter 9, below). Eaton Socon, as did its smaller neighbour at Wyboston, developed into a densely clustered habitation centre over time. To the west, the smaller medieval settlements either remained as hamlets, or survived as single farmsteads. Interestingly, only three new farms were built in the parish as a result of inclosure (White 1964, 16).

A third place named in Domesday is Sudbury, a township in its own right at that time but which has since vanished. The location of Sudbury is uncertain, but it was most probably situated to the north of Eaton Socon towards the Ouse, at or near the site of the later medieval manor of Crosshall. Crosshall is situated on third terrace river gravels in the northeast corner of the parish — an area of small enclosures in 1799. Map 7.32 (HRO: map 3425, Eaton Socon Parish Inclosure Map, 1799). Eaton Ford (a medieval hamlet built near to the crossing point for St Neots) and Small End (a later hamlet between Eaton Socon and Wyboston) were set amongst the multiple systems of common fields that served those settlements on the eastern side of the parish. The number and complexity of these open fields may result from the proximity to each other of these eastern, riparian settlements. Map 7.33 (Bedfordshire Record Office P5/26/3 1800) shows the settlement distribution and the new inclosures for part of Eaton Socon parish, as well as the names of the open fields that they superseded.

Eaton Socon is now a neighbourhood in the town of St Neots, but retains its village character, even though it is surrounded on all but its riverside by modern housing and industrial estates. It has an impressive green with the church in one corner. Its main street, although now much subject to modern infill, retains a number of timber-framed village homesteads and elements of its eighteenth and nineteenth coaching past.

Plate 7. 16 Eaton Socon Today



Green and parish church of St Mary



The Great North Road and coaching inn



Riverside Mill



Site of Anarchy Castle



Riverside



St Neots' Workhouse, Eaton Ford

Map 7.32 Eaton Socon inclosure map of 1799



Map 7.33 Eaton Socon parish map c 1800 -- detail



Eynesbury [Plate 7.17]

Settlement in the area covered by the Saxon parish of Eynesbury shows a not dissimilar pattern from that in Eaton Socon parish on the other side of the river. The more nucleated habitation was situated along the river and the inland settlement pattern on the claylands was much more dispersed. Following its separation from St Neots in 1204, the township settlement that gave its name to the still extensive parish was on the first to second terrace of the river gravels above the 15 metre contour. However, Eynesbury had a very discreet three-field system that may reflect its origins as a potential twelfth century planned re-settlement. Map 7.34 (HRO: PM2/6)²⁵. Eynesbury's topography is less elevated than that of Eaton Socon parish and by the time of Domesday it was less wooded. The later reduced parish of Eynesbury was in two portions, separated by the land detached from the original parish to create St Neots (see Plan 7.4). However, many of the hamlets and farmsteads in both the post 1204 parishes of Eynesbury and St Neots were in existence prior to the fission of the Saxon *parochia* of Eynesbury and their settlement distribution can best be understood in relation to this undivided topography.

A major factor in the location of settlement away from the river seems to have been a Romanised trackway that crosses the parish in a north north-easterly direction parallel to the Ouse and about four kilometres east of it (Margary 1955, 176-178). Its exact origin is unknown, but there is evidence that the Romans modified at least parts of it. Its general course follows a rough alignment from Eynesbury to Godmanchester, although without the

²⁵ Post-1204 Eynesbury's field system is less complex than that associated with the planned settlement at Eaton Socon of about the same date. There are reasons for this, one being that the re-location of Eaton Socon was a simple displacement of settlement that did not involve parish fission and the potential laying out of a new field system. It was most probably the proximity of other existing townships that was the reason for the multiple common fields at Eaton Socon and this was not required to change.

precision of a Roman military road. There is also a well-attested stretch of Roman Road from Sandy (Bedfordshire) as far as Puttock's Hardwick in Eynesbury that reputedly proceeds from thence to Godmanchester, although its continuation from Eynesbury is conjectural (Margary 1973, 202-204). However, at about the point that the established route of the road from Sandy falters, the above mentioned Romanised track commences at a distance of about one kilometre to the east. Although this track way is on a slightly divergent course from that later assumed by Margary for the Sandy to Puttock's Hardwick road, it nevertheless runs more directly to Godmanchester than the alleged alignment of Margary's revised course. It is along the alignment of this ancient track way (known as either Hale's Lane or Mere Way) that many settlement features are to be found in the parishes of Eynesbury, St Neots and Abbotsley, but often at some distance from it on either side. Plan 7.5 illustrates the relationship between this feature and a series of settlements, habitation elements and administrative boundaries. The trackway, itself, cuts across the natural lie of the land transversely on its route to Godmanchester, providing a north/south passage over the essentially east/west grain of the land. This is not a pattern repeated in the claylands on the Eaton Socon side of the river, where the distribution of habitation responds to the east/west grain without reference to a similar north/south route way.

Eynesbury is today, like Eaton Socon, a neighbourhood within St Neots. It too has been largely built up by modern estates, except for its village centre, river frontage and along Hen Brook. The church was built on the corner of what was once a large green (mostly built over in the nineteenth century). The main village street was St Mary's that connected the village with St Neots. This street was built up by the nineteenth century

with typical back of pavement continuous street frontages, with irregular curtilages behind. Medieval farmsteads were dispersed around the green, but the small enclosures along the village streets were in-filled gradually between the seventeenth and early twentieth centuries. Building styles and materials reflect this diversity.

Plate 7. 17 Eynesbury Today



St Mary's Street, looking south towards parish church



Seventeenth century village house



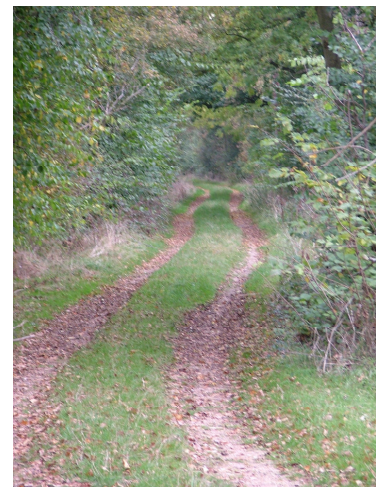
Eynesbury village green, looking north



Hen Brook, between Eynesbury and St Neots

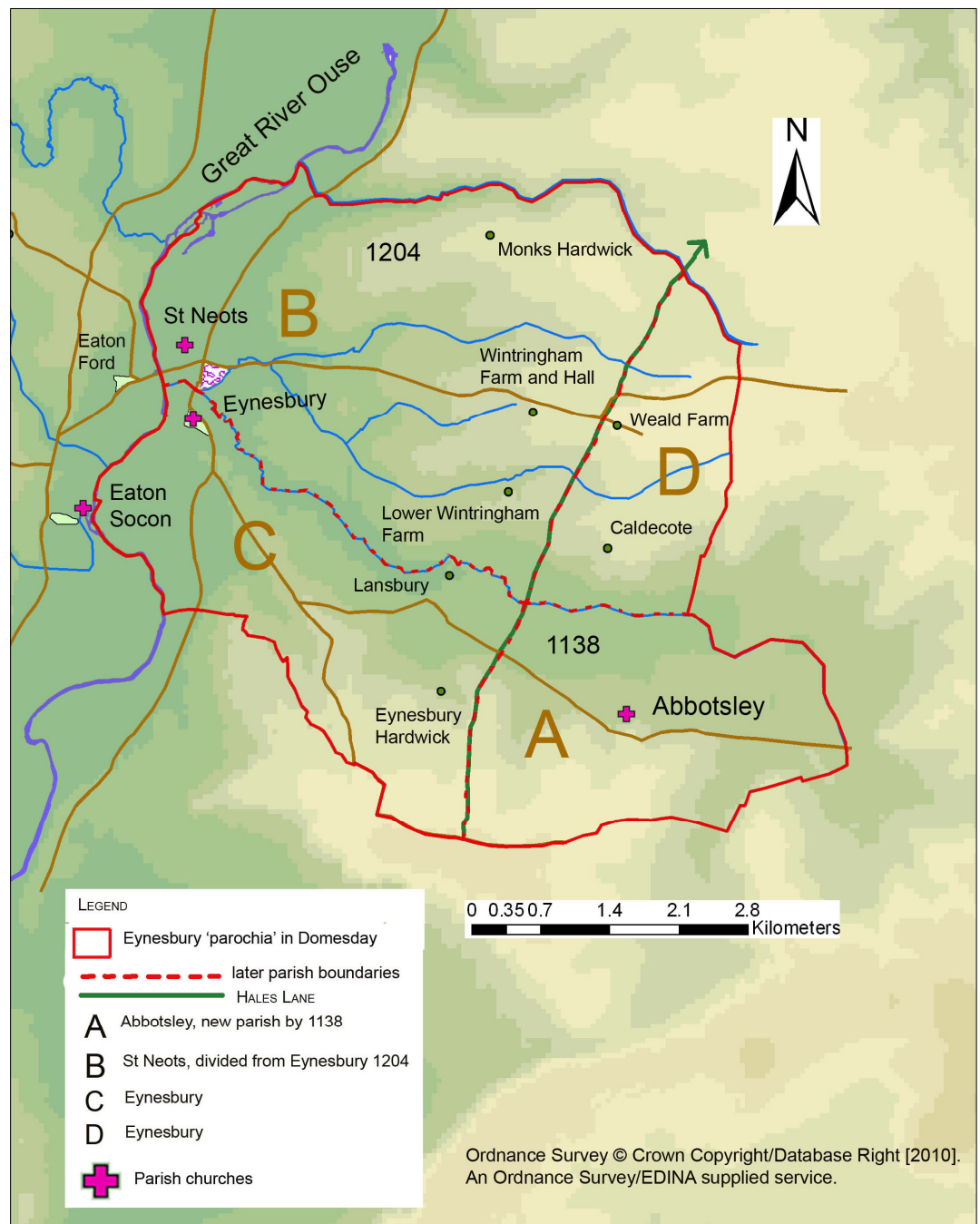


Eynesbury meadow from the south east

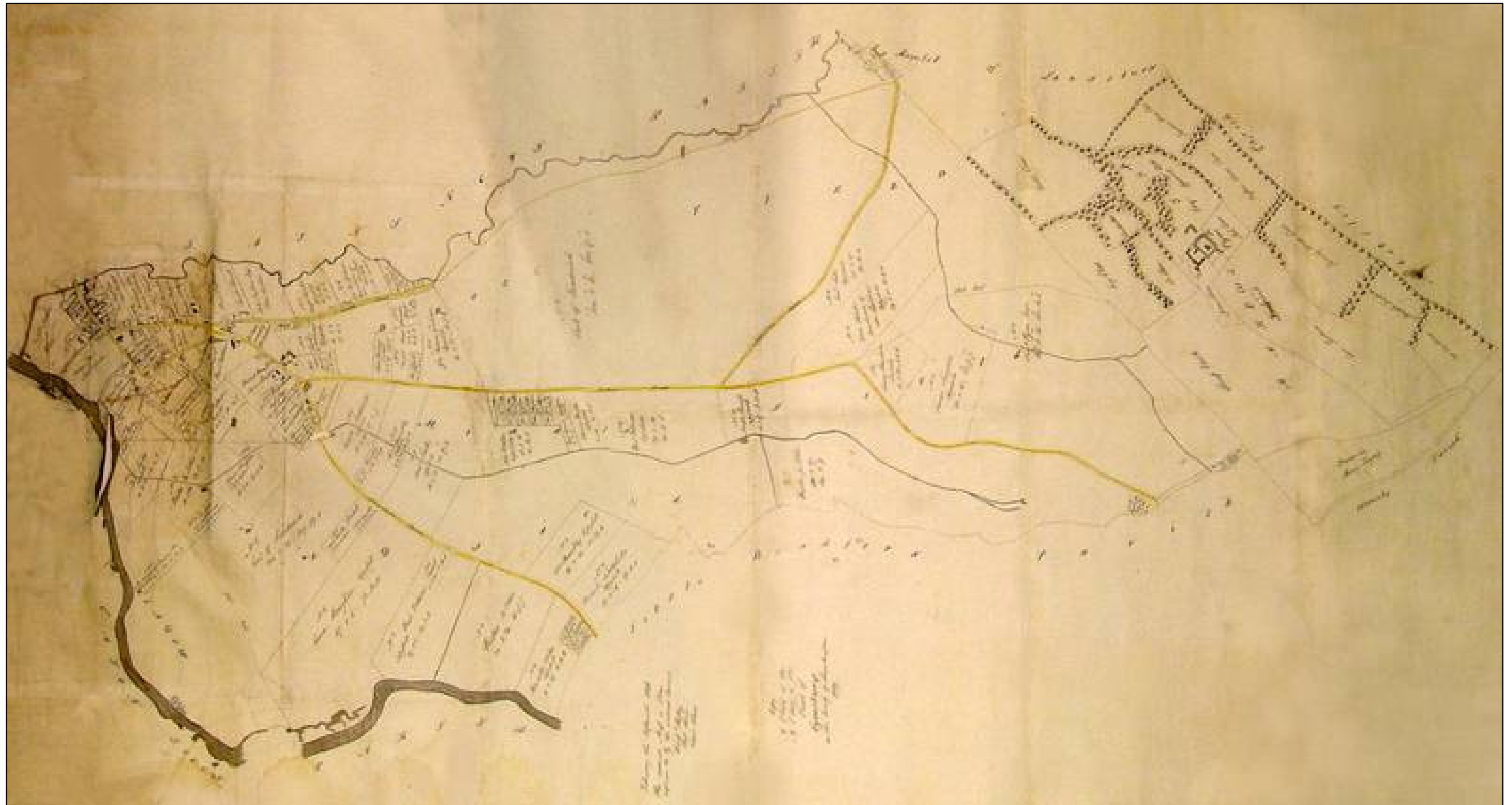


Hales Way

Plan 7.5 Medieval Topography of the Eynesbury *Parochia*



Map 7.34 Eynesbury inclosure map 1801



St Neots [Plate 7.18]

The twelfth-century township of St Neots seems to have been a planned settlement, established by the Priory during the course of the twelfth century on land acquired by 1113, which was at the heart of the parish that was finally established in 1204. The core of this new settlement was a large market square near to the river crossing with the conventual enclosure to the north and the tenements of the men of St Neots laid out on the other three sides — the parish church lay slightly to the south east.

St Neots became a successful trading centre in the seventeenth century with the opening up of the Great Ouse to navigation from the Wash. The present-day town square and high street reflects this success with the scale and extent of their burgage plots and architecture. Although many of the town's buildings retain evidence of earlier timber framing, brick is the ubiquitous building material observable today. There is a mix of architectural styles along the principal thoroughfares, reflecting the town's long history. However, the street frontages are for the most part back of pavement with a continuous building line. Later, nineteenth century expansion into what was one recently enclosed fields produced buff brick dwellings and uniform building grids.

In the latter part of the twentieth century St Neots expanded into a new town, absorbing its neighbours at Eynesbury and Eaton Socon at the same time. How this happened and the detail of the town's earlier morphology is discussed in detail in Chapter 9.

Plate 7. 18 St Neots Today



Eighteenth and nineteenth century facades, Market Square (Paines' Brewery)



Market day, St Neots' Market Square



View looking south east across Hen Brook to Eynesbury from Paines' Brewery



High Street, later facades fronting medieval burgage plots



Looking north from Town Bridge towards the old Priory site



Late nineteenth and twentieth century terraced and semi-detached houses, Avenue Road

COMMENTARY

In the course of the detailed analysis of individual parishes in this chapter, a number of themes have emerged concerning the morphology of different settlements. Primary settlement tends to be riparian in this part of Huntingdonshire and the largest, oldest and historically wealthiest ones are to be found on the gravel terraces of the Ouse with access to the river at important river crossings; for example, Godmanchester, Slepe (St Ives), and Eynesbury (St Neots). Earith, Holywell, and Fenstanton are fen edge settlements that have taken advantage of the resources of their low-lying alluviums since early medieval times, both before and after they were drained in the early modern period. Earith, in particular has been successful as an inland port. It was not only the river that influenced the development of settlement habitation. Important roads, such as the Great North Road, brought wealth to places like Eaton Socon; lesser roads and road junctions influenced the morphology of other centres of habitation at places like Great Paxton, St Ives, Hemingford Abbots, Abbotsley and Bluntisham.

The low boulder clay hills either side of the river may have been settled later than the river gravels, and the earliest settlements were probably in areas of wood-pasture, before the woodland diminished to leave a pattern of farmsteads and hamlets in more open countryside. Some early settlements away from the river valley, in areas that were originally heavily wooded such as Toseland, were formed around roughly rectangular greens that may reflect early clearances. Other parts of these uplands were protected from settlement as royal or episcopal forests until the later Middle Ages, often resulting in heath land that was usually enclosed at the time of Parliamentary Inclosure, as happened at Needingworth and Bluntisham. Where areas of wood-pasture were cleared after about the twelfth century,

such as happened at Oldhurst and Woodhurst, their township territory became transformed into open arable fields. In other parishes (especially to the west of the Ouse) some of the woodland persisted as standing woods, inland from the open arable fields of their riparian settlements; examples are found at Brampton and Buckden.

What becomes clear from a study of individual parishes is that all places are to some degree different, as well as sharing characteristics with others; their attributes are complex and often fall between traditional classifications. For example, whilst settlement morphology at Toseland and Woodhurst demonstrate their origins as 'woodland' settlements, the establishment of medieval open-field agriculture followed by Parliamentary Inclosure has given both townships a distinctive morphology; thus there are a number of spatial elements from different stages of their development that are still easily discernable in the current landscape.

Recognising such changes over time builds up a picture of the morphological periods central to Conzen's method. In Huntingdonshire, the twelfth century, in particular, was a time of agricultural expansion, new townships developed, new parishes formed, and a number of planned villages were built — such as those of Eaton Socon, Eynesbury and Hemingford Grey. This was a time of consolidation for a settlement pattern still extant in the contemporary landscape. Between the twelfth century and the nineteenth century, for the next period of major change in rural settlement in the Ouse Valley, each of the settlements regarded here have their own story of continuity and change. Following the depredations of the Black Death in the fourteenth century, the subsequent recovery in population numbers and the economy is recorded in the buildings of the seventeenth century and later. This is most clearly seen in places such as

Godmanchester, St Ives and St Neots, but is also repeated in most of the smaller settlements too. The state of rural settlement morphology is clearly seen in the inclosure maps of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, at the cusp between the old order and the emergence of the industrialised and urbanised communities that emerged during the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The diversity of form exemplified by Ouse Valley settlements is a caution against over-simplification. It emphasises the need to look closely at the local when making judgements of historical value and significance in the course of making planning decisions, where the issues are always site specific. In other words the level of analysis needs to reflect the scale of the planning decision. The level of resolution that has been adopted in this chapter for settlement within a parochial framework would help in the creation of settlement-wide planning strategy for the management of the local historical environment — the context for site-specific decision-making. The information needed to answer specific questions of historical value and significance, however, can only be gauged when the question itself is known. Therefore, narratives need to cover settlement form in as much detail as possible.

Individual settlement analysis is clearly important, but this chapter has mainly identified the more readily observable and tangible elements of settlement morphology. It is also necessary to understand how the patterns of settlements and their morphology fit with the wider study of settlement, where the less physically tangible, socio-economic factors come into play — and this is the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 8: THE OUSE VALLEY

SETTLEMENT MORPHOLOGY IN CONTEXT

“..In the hilly parts or dry lands, it yields great crops of corn, and affords excellent pasture for sheep; and in the lower lands the meadows are exceedingly rich, and feed abundance of fine cattle...”¹

¹ About Huntingdonshire, from *A New Display of the Beauties of England*, R Goadby, Vol 2, 2nd edition, London 1776.

INTRODUCTION

The discussion in the previous chapter concentrated mainly on the elements of settlement morphology that are observable in the landscape, or are documented as observable in past landscapes. It was concerned with settlement within the Ouse Valley parishes, without reference to places beyond that particular geographical area. This chapter takes into account the wider geographical context within which Huntingdonshire is situated. It also examines how the great diversity of settlement pattern and form to be found there can be better understood within the context of its own socio-economic history.

NARRATIVE

The Ouse Valley area of Huntingdonshire has been closely associated with parts of two neighbouring counties, namely, southwest Cambridgeshire and northeast Bedfordshire. In *Shaping Medieval Landscapes* Williamson has cogently set out much of the evidence that relates settlement patterns in these areas, recognising that:

The *extent* of settlement dispersion, settlement mobility, field system irregularity, and late re-organisation of fields, is much greater in west Cambridgeshire, south Huntingdonshire and Bedfordshire than in areas further to the west, in the ‘core’ of the champion Midlands (Williamson 2003, p.79)

However, he sees this as a matter of degree, not kind. Most of the evidence rehearsed by Williamson, however, is from Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire — to which can now be added that from Huntingdonshire. Certain general themes are recognisable across this small region, but it should be allowed that the detail is not necessarily similar. For example, there are differences in settlement morphology between those parishes

situated on the western and eastern sides of the Ouse Valley; those on the west retaining more of the wood-pasture or woodland cited in the eleventh century than those on the east. Whilst this has not changed the propensity for a mixture of nucleated and dispersed settlement, it does help to account for the quite subtle differences between the settlement patterns of, for example, Eaton Socon and Eynesbury as discussed above and which remain important in local planning terms today.

Regional approaches to the categorisation and analysis of historic settlement have been referred to earlier. Among these approaches is the idea that the country can be broken down into a number of natural divisions, or *pays*, based on physical geography and the effects of superficial and underlying geology (Everitt 1985, pp. 11-40) — the River & Wold model. Using this approach to establish the underlying unity of the sub-region formed by those parts of Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire, variously referred to as ‘south eastern champion’ or ‘south east Midlands arable district’ by Williamson (2003, p.63 and 2002, p.30, respectively) may be of value. Oosthuizen (2006, p.20), in discussing the Bourne Valley in neighbouring Cambridgeshire, seems to be arguing that what she recognises as a ‘transitional’ area — one that demonstrates both champion and woodland characteristics — should be recognised as a *pay* in its own right. Unfortunately, Oosthuizen is not completely clear whether she is applying this conclusion to just the Bourne Valley, or the whole of the ‘south eastern champion’ area. However, the notion that north and east Bedfordshire, South Huntingdonshire and south west Cambridgeshire might be recognised on its own merits is an appealing one. More modestly, the course taken here is to consider settlement in the Ouse Valley solely in the context of its own sub-regional topology.

Villages, Hamlets, Farmsteads and Fields

The evolution of English rural settlement has long been of interest to scholars, and ideas about how our present settlement patterns and forms came about has changed over time. In the nineteenth century the prevailing view was that Saxon settlement was a complete break with the Roman-Celtic past, so that when Hoskins wrote about it he was still expressing that view:

[The] Anglo-Saxons moved into a country that was generally still a wilderness, with almost everything yet to be done. In certain favoured regions like the Cotswolds and north Oxfordshire they may have entered a fairly civilised landscape; but in general they had to start (literally) from scratch. (Hoskins 1955, 42)

Within twenty years Hoskins' contemporary, Postan, was able to postulate the modern view that there was significant continuity between Roman Britain and the Saxon settlement (Postan 1975, 1-15). However, the story of the actual transition between the Roman settlement pattern and that of, say, Saxo-Norman England was very complex (Taylor 1983, 110).

It is now universally recognised by scholars that the Roman settlement pattern was both dispersed and ubiquitous, that Early Saxon settlement enjoyed a degree of continuity within this general pattern (Rippon 2000, 57-58), and that Early and Middle Saxon settlement was also dispersed, but more thinly spread (Taylor 1983, 124). The emergence of nucleated 'villages' did not occur until later, and then only in certain parts of the country (principally the Midlands) as the dominant settlement type (Taylor 1983, 125). The process of nucleation seems to have taken place over a long period and occurred in different parts of the country at different times; perhaps starting as early as the mid-eighth century (Hamerow 2002, 120-129), or possibly the ninth century (Lewis et al 1997, 95). In Northamptonshire, the

process of nucleation seems to have been completed by the end of the ninth century (Brown and Foard 1998, 73-76), but it was still continuing further east in Cambridgeshire after the Conquest (Oosthuizen 2002, 110-115) — an experience that was also shared by Huntingdonshire and Bedfordshire communities at this time. The process of nucleation, however, did not continue much beyond the twelfth century (Taylor 2002, 53-54); but perhaps as interesting is why in areas of nucleated patterns of settlement later dispersed settlement was also occurring (Taylor 1995, 33).

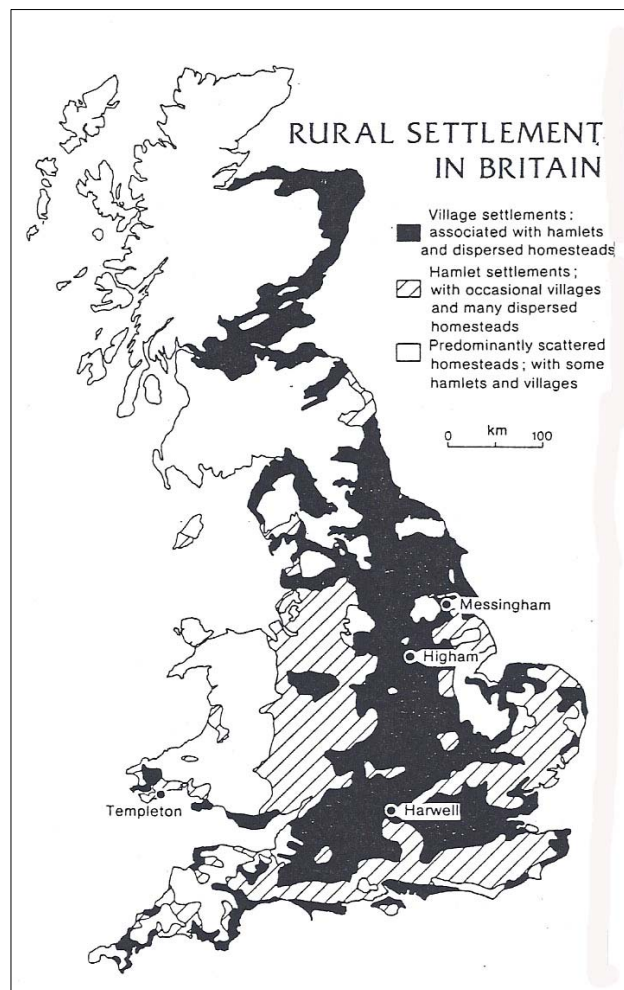
When in the fourteenth century climate change, famine, and the Black Death resulted in a dramatic drop in population, settlement pattern and the morphology of many settlements were drastically affected for a time. Dreadful as these events were for those forced to experience them, these changes were but a rather extreme occurrence within a continuous process of change in settlement patterns (Taylor 1983, 151). Shifts in settlement patterns and morphology are constant events that continue into the present, although the pace of growth today is considerably more rapid than experienced by previous ages. The management of the current set of conditions invites the answer to the question of how settlement has developed in the past.

Degrees of Nucleation and Dispersal of Habitation

In the study of medieval settlement (especially) the degree of dispersal of habitation is frequently considered to be a good way of categorising settlement patterns. Often, there is an underlying assumption that in any given area settlement will be predominantly either nucleated or dispersed. Early typologies sometimes allowed for a hybrid classification; for example, in Roberts' earlier work (in what would later broadly correspond with his Central Province) settlement is described as "village settlements: associated

with hamlets and dispersed homesteads”, and (in the area of the later named South Eastern Province) settlement is labelled “Hamlet Settlements: with occasional villages and many dispersed homesteads” (Roberts 1987, fig 1.1) Plate 8.1.

Plate 8.1 Rural Settlement Patterns in Britain [after Thorpe and Sissons]



This is perhaps good enough in the context of the national picture — but whether this works at the local level is less certain. For more localised studies, the practical task of establishing the dominant settlement pattern is not as easy in practice as the theory, based on generalised regional classifications, may lead us to believe. Roberts’ later work with Stuart Wrathmell has attempted to overcome this difficulty by re-classifying

regions by degrees of dispersal and allowing for sub-regional areas (Roberts and Wrathmell 2000). However, arguably, this is still too blunt an instrument to empower local analysis. For example, the detailed analysis of each parish in Chapter 7 has demonstrated that the pre-inclosure settlement pattern did not conform to the broad regional classification for champion countryside judged by these regional typologies. For, whilst there are some classic nucleated village settlements at Eynesbury, Eaton Socon, and St Ives, there are also other more loosely clustered settlements in common field townships, such as at the Offords; furthermore, elsewhere there are areas where the settlement pattern looks very dispersed within old enclosed land. What is remarkable is that this variety within the habitation pattern occurs in close association, so that even within a single parish one dominant type may not be satisfactorily established.

Lewis et al (1997), for their study of medieval settlement in four east Midlands counties, produced a rather more simplified structural typology of settlement pattern than that of Roberts and Wrathmell, but similarly based on nineteenth century Ordnance Survey maps (Lewis et al 1997, 57). The problem is not so much to do with the terms of the structural typology used (clusters, regular or irregular rows etc.) but with the determination of the critical mass of homesteads needed to identify a group of homesteads as nucleated settlement. Lewis sets this at five, but this seems rather arbitrary and the whole approach seems more about sustaining a methodology to interrogate the nineteenth-century map evidence than anything else. The examination of the evidence in the Ouse Valley, on the other hand, has shown that the concept of whether habitation patterns are nucleated or not is relative to circumstances, rather than absolute. For example, the medieval settlement of Weald (partly in the parish of Eynesbury, partly in St Neots)

was from at least the twelfth century until its partial desertion (probably in the fourteenth century) a settlement of nucleated habitation (possibly with up to twelve tofts) set within its own fields, with a manor house and chapel (CCC HER ref. 02364); surely a nucleated settlement. Similar settlements were at Wintringham (CCC HER ref. 01117) and Puttocks Hardwick (CCC HER ref. 02320) nearby and equivalent examples can be found over the river beyond Eaton Socon (White 1977). Presumably, therefore, in the twelfth century the area covered by the parishes of Eynesbury, St Neots and Eaton Socon might be thought of as one of small, densely packed nuclear settlement — or was it rather an area of dispersed hamlets? Certainly (following the demographic changes from the fourteenth century onwards) it was by the early modern period a landscape of scattered farmsteads; a perception reinforced by the emergence of the civil parishes which provided a sense of place within which settlement patterns could be evaluated with a much more modern eye.

At Diddington, Southoe and Broughton, three geographically associated Domesday townships whose size might suggest nucleated settlement (according to Lewis's rule) appeared in the estate and inclosure maps of the late eighteenth and early to mid-nineteenth century to be an area of rather dispersed settlement — as in fact they remain to this day. Interestingly, this was originally an area of open field farming where nucleated settlement might be assumed; populations have risen since Domesday (thirty-five households in DB, 509 population in 1841 according to Lewes' Topographical Dictionary) and post-inclosure farms were few. It is not easy to determine whether habitation was more nucleated in the eleventh century relatively speaking, or whether the extent and character of the territory has a greater impact than just density has on how the

settlement pattern is perceived. Similar issues arise at Offord Darcy in particular, where the greater part of the habitation was loosely clustered in one quarter of the parish (it also had, incidentally, a handful of enclosed farmsteads by the early modern period, at least), but does not have what might be called a regular form of nucleation. The neighbouring township of Offord Cluny has a similar, but less pronounced morphology. The complex morphology of these settlements is not only of academic interest, but raises the important and practical issue of how development within such areas should be approached. It is suggested that planning decisions ought to recognise the local individuality of these morphologies, rather than rely on generalised approaches that might lead developers to the conclusion that Ouse Valley settlements are invariably nucleated ones.

Township Fields

The analysis of field systems has fascinated landscape historians, landscape archaeologists and others for a considerable number of years. Research has tended to be organised into a number of themes dealing with different aspects of field morphology. The three key themes are; first, the origins of open field systems and the morphology of open field systems; secondly, the processes and chronology of enclosure (both of which are addressed to some degree here); and thirdly, the continuity between field systems with different morphologies and of different ages, which is looked at in more detail in Chapter 9. The character of fields and their morphologies is important from a planning point of view because they so often influenced the way in which settlements developed. Settlement expansion was dependant upon the availability of land and the character of a settlement could be strongly influenced by the character of the fields over which it spread.

The morphology of open field systems, their origins and development is closely linked to issues of settlement nucleation and dispersal. Historically a consensus has formed amongst landscape historians that England's countryside demonstrates some broad regional differences characterised by open fields and nucleated settlement at one end of the spectrum, and enclosed fields and dispersed settlement patterns at the other — what Williamson has described as the two countrysides (Williamson 2003, 1). This idea is reflected in the writings of commentators since the sixteenth century (see Chapter 5 above) and has been promoted by academics from the nineteenth century onwards; for example, as the land of 'villages' and 'hamlets' by Maitland (1897); the 'planned' and 'ancient' countryside of Rackham (1986); and the regional 'provinces' of Roberts & Wrathmell (2002), to name some of the more frequently quoted. This kind of analysis would place the Huntingdonshire Ouse valley geographically and typologically between the 'champion' countryside of the Midlands to the west (typified by its classic two or three open field system with nucleated villages) and the 'woodland' regions of the East Anglian boulder clays, with its enclosed fields and dispersed settlement pattern to the east (Williamson, 2003, 72). Huntingdonshire is usually considered part of the Midlands' typology, although south Huntingdonshire demonstrates something of both typologies. Using the traditional classification for the analysis of field morphology is no more satisfactory (it is suggested) than it proved to be for habitation in the discussion above. An exploration of field morphology related to the actual forms encountered, therefore, was been found to be preferable.

The question of when, and indeed why, open field systems were first introduced is a contested one. Estimates for the chronology for the

establishment of open fields has varied widely and, for example, whilst Hall (1981, 36-7) has proposed the eighth and ninth centuries for those in the Midlands, Fox (1981, 88) and Taylor (1983, 130/1) have favoured a later chronology with open fields developing between the tenth and twelfth centuries. A number of reasons have been put forward as to why this particular system of common agricultural practice should have been developed. Joan Thirsk in a couple of articles published in *Past and Present* (Thirsk 1964, 3-29; 1966, 142-147) put forward a complex mechanism involving population growth, traditions of inheritance and colonisation, the contraction of pasture and the use of the heavy plough — all of which combined to encourage the adoption of common agricultural management. Thirsk's article proved to be seminal and most subsequent accounts have toyed with aspects of her account — even if they have not been always able to endorse it fully. However, the subsequent debate did not produce an agreed and accepted argument for the phenomenon. Dodgshon's contention that “the reason why no single interpretation has been agreed upon is because more than one appears valid” (Dodgshon 1980, 30) is probably right, and indeed he went on to effectively demonstrate this. Ultimately, however, these are explanations of how it might have happened rather than why it actually did; an important question in itself, but for the purposes of this study not of primary importance. What is of significance for the Ouse Valley settlements is the changes to the open field system and the development of their settlements during the course of the twelfth century especially.

Of the townships within the study area that were either founded or re-organised in the twelfth century as a result of fission, the majority seem to have had a three or four field system; often in contrast to other settlements

in the same ecclesiastical parish which had less regular arrangements. St Neots may have had a three-field system on the priory's demesne lands, which was possibly re-organised at the time of the twelfth century foundation of St Neots' township. The remaining town lands had an irregular field system, which possibly reflects an earlier organisation inherited with the estate when it was granted to the priory in 1113. Eynesbury had a three-field system as well as there being a number of less regular field systems elsewhere in the parish. Another example of an irregular field system connected with twelfth century fission is at the Offords. It now seems that the complex tenurial arrangements recorded in Domesday for the township of Offord persisted in the new parish of Offord Darcy (1,854 acres), which reflected that complexity in its seven common fields and multiple areas of old enclosed lands. On the other hand, the township of Offord Cluny (1,046 acres) after its separation from Offord Darcy retained the original parish church but appears to have gained a simpler field system after its fission. This is the reverse to what happened at the Hemingfords where it was the new parish of Hemingford Grey that demonstrated the greater signs of planned re-organisation. In summary, parishes with a single township or manor (that is smaller parishes with less complicated tenurial arrangements) are more likely to have a three or four field system than larger parishes with complex tenurial arrangements. Furthermore, the tendency for those townships in the Ouse Valley that emerged in the twelfth century as a result of fission to have regular field systems demonstrates Dodgshon's assertion that the occurrence of township re-organisation afforded an opportunity to change field layout from irregular to regular ones (Dodgshon 1980, 51-52).

As suggested above, south Huntingdonshire settlements (the distribution of their habitation and field morphology) share their form and history in many respects with adjacent areas in north Bedfordshire and west Cambridgeshire (not forgetting, of course, that Eaton Socon was once itself in Bedfordshire and much of its medieval parish remains so). In west Cambridgeshire (Taylor 1973, 77-85) and in north Bedfordshire (Brown and Taylor 1989, 61) recognised a similar settlement pattern of smaller nucleated villages associated with hamlets and isolated farmsteads. West Cambridgeshire as a transitional zone between the Midlands' field system and the 'woodlands' of East Anglia has been noted by Postgate (Postgate 1973, 281) and he goes on to suggest that in western Cambridgeshire the re-organisation of earlier field systems to the Midland model was interrupted in many places, so that cropping systems were often superimposed on systems composed of multiple fields (Postgate 1973, 294). In some townships in Bedfordshire at the time of inclosure, the same kind of field morphology as was found in Huntingdonshire existed: older enclosures and multiple open fields within the same parish territory (Brown and Taylor 1989, 62). Additionally, Brown and Taylor have also pointed to the relationship of the pattern of ancient roads and trackways to settlement morphology in north Bedfordshire (Brown and Taylor, 1999, 109), which looks not dissimilar from what was happening in some Ouse Valley parishes, especially in the Eynesbury area. Whether exactly the same phenomenon persisted in Cambridgeshire is uncertain, but it is possible (Oosthuizen 2006).

It is now widely accepted that over the tract of country running through north Bedfordshire, south Huntingdonshire and west Cambridgeshire there was a combination of features usually associated with

either 'champion' or 'woodland' countryside (Roberts and Wrathmell 1998, 102; Williamson 2003, 72). However, this conclusion has been reached through excellent but relatively limited research in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, with a rather more cursive estimation of the situation in Huntingdonshire: in fact, in Baker's and Butlin's seminal work on field systems of the British Isles, Huntingdonshire was left out completely (Baker and Butlin (eds.) 1973). From this study it can now be said that in Huntingdonshire regular field systems consisted of anything from three to four or five fields, but that many open-field systems contained multiple fields in often very complex groupings. Although all parishes had open fields, many also had enclosed fields farmed in severalty and in many parishes open and enclosed fields were found in close association. This observation, however, is mainly based on the situation at the time of Parliamentary Inclosure, and although the open fields at this time were almost certainly based on medieval systems (and were in some cases almost certainly identical) more detailed research needs to be done on their history. Similarly, whilst there is evidence that some of the earliest enclosed fields are late medieval, others date to the Early Modern period or later. The situation in Huntingdonshire and adjacent areas reinforces the danger of attempting to apply broad, regional generalisations.

Enclosure

Background Discussion

From the point of view of understanding how settlement developed, the process of enclosure is important because it affected the mechanics of land-ownership and influenced the availability of land for purposes other than agriculture. In the Ouse valley, most places in the area were enclosed by Parliamentary Inclosure, although not necessarily in their totality. Land that was enclosed in this way more often than not was laid out with new boundaries that ignored earlier land divisions (although there were some important exceptions). Initially, settlement expansion often utilised the closes that were associated with existing buildings within the settlement, but later expansion needed the larger amounts of land released from communal control by later, Parliamentary Inclosure.

The nature of the post-inclosure landscape has, for the most part, obscured the extent of enclosure in the earlier landscape. Prior to Parliamentary Inclosure there were two broad classes of enclosure — home closes, associated with buildings and those activities directly associated with them — and other old closes; effectively groups of agricultural fields owned in severalty. At the time of Parliamentary Inclosure all townships in all parishes had some pre-existing old enclosures and in many cases it is these enclosures that have proved to be the most persistent in terms of survival into the modern landscape. Only rarely were buildings erected that were not set within some sort of enclosure and in many cases their purpose required other closes to be created nearby (stockyards would be one example, cottage gardens another) and it is these closes associated with elements of habitation that have frequently formed the curtilages of later buildings. Even in one-township parishes where the arable was organised into three or four

open fields that more or less occupied the whole area of the parish the habitation elements of the settlement possessed this type of enclosure. However, there were other examples of old enclosures in many parishes that were about the way that agriculture itself was managed and practiced beyond the requirements of habitation uses. Already by the middle of the eighteenth century there were a surprisingly large number of enclosed farms in some parishes, some of which were already old — such as Cotton farm at Offord Darcy, was already enclosed by the sixteenth century (see Chapter 7).

Within the parishes along the Ouse Valley, as elsewhere in Huntingdonshire, piecemeal enclosure increased in intensity during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, although only one parish (Midloe) was completely enclosed by this means before 1750 (Porter 1992, 82-87 & Figure 3). Although early, piecemeal enclosure generally resulted in changes of land use from arable to pasture in the north and west of the county, in the southeast this was not necessarily the case and arable still flourished in the lighter soils of the Ouse Valley (Porter 1992, 90-92).

In St Neots and Eynesbury some isolated farms had emerged (or were emerging) prior to Parliamentary Inclosure. Some at least had their origins in small medieval manors that at one time had their own hamlets and field systems. For example, Weald and Caldecote in Eynesbury, and Monks Hardwick in St Neots — following their abandonment as hamlets in the later Middle Ages — had become by the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, farms set within their own enclosed system of fields. A surprising number of these sites throughout the Ouse Valley are also associated with

medieval moats and relic ridge and furrow². These scattered farmsteads were chiefly a phenomenon of the larger parishes, such as Eaton Socon, Brampton, and Bluntisham, but also in some of the smaller but previously more wooded parishes, for example, Little Paxton. In some places there were also older enclosures that had grown up within the open fields by a process of acquisition and consolidation of blocks of freehold or copyhold land, but where the farmstead buildings were elsewhere, not set within their own fields. A number of instances are recorded on pre-inclosure estate plans (such as that of the Duke of Manchester's farm at Holywell-cum-Needingworth of 1764) as well as on the post-inclosure plans showing the new allotment boundaries (for example, at Hemingford Grey, but also elsewhere). Many examples of these consolidated blocks identifiable pre-inclosure did indeed survive the redistribution of land at inclosure, but others did not (as was the case on the Manchester estate at Holywell) and these lands were thrown into the pot for re-distribution along with the rest of the open fields within which they were situated. An overview of existing enclosure in each of the parishes at the time of Parliamentary Inclosure is shown in Table 8.1.

² There is an extensive record of such occurrences in the Cambridgeshire Heritage Environment Record.

Table 8.1 Overview of Settlement Nucleation/ Dispersal in post-Domesday Parishes

PARISHES + parishes founded in twelfth C	ACREAGE	Occurrence Nucleated Settlements	Presence Dispersed Settlement	Evidence of Medieval Assarting (wood/ fenland)	Degree Enclosed Prior To Parliamentary Inclosure
EYNESBURY	3,035	1	YES	YES?	HIGH
+ST NEOTS	2,964	1	YES	?	HIGH
+ABBOTSLEY	1,723	1	NO	NO	LOW
EATON SOCON	7,602	2	YES	YES	HIGH
GREAT PAXTON (Incl. Little Paxton & Toseland)	4,269	1	YES	YES	MEDIUM
SOUTHOE (Incl. Midloe* & part Boughton)	2,368**	0	YES	YES	MEDIUM
DIDDINGTON (Including part Boughton)	1292	0	YES	?	LOW
OFFORD CLUNY	1,046	1	NO	NO	LOW
+OFFORD DARCY	1,854	1	YES	NO	43%
BUCKDEN	3,096	1	YES	YES	HIGH
BRAMPTON	3,557	1	YES	YES	HIGH
GODMANCHESTER	4,832	1	NO	?	MEDIUM
HEMINGFORD ABBOTS	2,396	1	YES	NO	HIGH
+HEMINGFORD GREY	1,725	1	YES	NO	LOW
FENSTANTON (Chapelry at Hilton)	3,828	2?	NO	YES	LOW
BLUNTISHAM cum EARITH	3,354	2?	YES	YES	MEDIUM
HOLYWELL cum NEEDINGWORTH	2,911	2	NO	YES	LOW
SLEPE (Inc. Woodhurst & Oldhurst)	5,225	1	YES	YES	HIGH
HOUGHTON	1,549	1	NO	?	MEDIUM
WYTON	1,470	1	NO	NO	MEDIUM
HARTFORD cum SAPLEY (Chapelry at Kings Ripton)	3,047	1	YES	YES	HIGH

In terms of the type of common field systems that Parliamentary Inclosure replaced, the Ouse Valley presents a varied experience. In eight of the twenty-six parishes sampled there was a three-field (occasionally four-field) system, whilst in a further twelve parishes a three or four field system probably existed. However, in only the eleven smallest parishes were these compact field systems pre-eminent. In the larger parishes the three/ four field system existed alongside others: for example, within the parish of Slepe, Woodhurst and Oldhurst all had regular field systems. In other large parishes complex common fields with multiple sub-divisions occurred (such as at St Neots), which sometimes sat alongside even earlier enclosed landscapes (as at Eynesbury and St Neots). Fields systems in this part of Huntingdonshire reflected the manorial structure and most manors had their own system of common or (in some cases) enclosed fields even within single parishes.

By the time of the 1st edition 6" OS maps of the mid-nineteenth century the Ouse Valley was a countryside of enclosed farmsteads, a great number of which had been the direct result of the inclosure movement itself. It is estimated that throughout the district 75% of those farmsteads situated outside village centres were post-inclosure farms³. However, in the parishes of St Neots, Eynesbury, Southoe, Diddington, and Offord Darcy, detached farmsteads that had been enclosed before the introduction of Parliamentary Inclosure, were in the majority. Although land newly enclosed by Parliamentary Act is typically distinguishable by the regular rectangular nature of its new hedgerows, this could also be true of earlier 'piecemeal' enclosures pre-dating Parliamentary Inclosure (the Bargroves at St Neots, recorded on an estate plan of 1757, is a good example). There are

³ This estimate has been achieved through visual inspection of historic maps by the author.

at least three examples in Huntingdonshire of estate maps that record the furlong boundaries in the open fields for the whole, or a greater part, of a parish. In these cases it is possible to see how many of these survived through to become post-inclosure boundaries and in fact there are not many of them. Most noticeable, perhaps, are examples at Love's Farm (St Neots) where not only were some of the medieval boundaries maintained at Parliamentary Inclosure, but one or two have been shown to date to the late Iron Age or Roman periods, if not earlier⁴. Furlong boundaries in this part of Huntingdonshire can be rectilinear but are frequently more irregular (often more wedge shaped), but typically most have curvilinear sides. Fields with boundaries with similar configurations are also found in areas of previous woodland where it is known that assarting was prevalent from the thirteenth century in places such as Buckden (see above). Furthermore, fields with comparable boundaries are found on the inclosure award plan for Houghton in an area that it is considered was heavily wooded at the time of Domesday, thus demonstrating another form of continuity into the post enclosure countryside.

Parliamentary Inclosure

The Parliamentary Inclosure movement affected all of the Ouse Valley communities in Huntingdonshire but the rate and extent of this form of enclosure varied from parish to parish. For the whole county of Huntingdonshire over 40% of the land was subject to Inclosure (the fourth most densely inclosed county below Cambridgeshire). Over 48% of open arable fields were inclosed (the third ranked county in terms of density of open field arable inclosure, just below Northamptonshire). In comparison,

⁴ Hinman, M., & Chester-Kadwell, B., et al, *Love's Farm Iron Age to Early Saxon Settlement at Love's Farm, St Neots, Cambridgeshire*, forthcoming 2011.

Parliamentary Inclosure accounted for less than 5% of common and waste in the county (Turner 1980, pp. 53; 55, fn. 55; and 61). This illustrates the importance of open field agriculture in Huntingdonshire in the eighteenth century, and the Ouse Valley parishes were in the heartlands of this phenomenon. However, although there was a very small amount of waste subject to inclosure awards, the parishes east of St Ives (in particular Holywell and Needingworth, Bluntisham and Earith, and Fenstanton) did have important heath and fen waste that was being improved and exploited at this time.

As in the other counties of open field arable farming, dates of inclosure between parishes varied considerably. Turner (1980, 63-85) has identified two peak periods of Parliamentary Inclosure, one during the decades of the 1750's and 1760's, with a second during the period of the Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815). Table 8.2⁵. The earliest date amongst these parishes was in 1770 for a draft inclosure award at St Neots, and the latest documented inclosure was in 1840 (final award) at Hilton. In fact there were three phases of inclosure, the first being from about 1770 to 1774 in five parishes (Houghton and Wyton sharing an award), which corresponds to Turner's first peak period; the second (and largest) between 1797 and 1814 in eighteen parishes (Toseland sharing an award with Great Paxton), which corresponds to Turner's Napoleonic War peak period. The final phase in the Ouse Valley was in the late 1830's in two parishes (Abbotsley and Hilton). For some parishes the date of inclosure is less certain and, for example, for Southoe no inclosure map has been located, but an estate map of 1801 shows an enclosed landscape typical of Parliamentary Inclosure.

⁵ In this table survey dates are used as on occasion the final award was not made until soon after the end of hostilities with the French, and to include these parishes in with the later awards would be misleading.

**Table 8.2 Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley Parliamentary Inclosure by Parish
Survey Date**

SURVEY DATE	PARISH	SURVEY DATE	PARISH
1770	St Neots	1803	Oldhurst
1771	Hartford	1806	Hemingford Abbots
1772	Brampton	1808	Slepe (St Ives)
1773/4	Houghton with Wyton	1810	Fenstanton
1797	Diddington	1811	Great Paxton with Toseland
1799	Eaton Socon	1811	Offord D'Arcy
1800	Eynesbury	1812	Little Paxton
1800	Holywell-cum- Needingworth	1813	Buckden
1800/06	Offord Cluny	1814	Bluntisham-cum-Earith
1801	Hemingford Grey	1838	Abbotsley
1801	Southoe	1840	Hilton
1802	Woodhurst		
1803	Godmanchester		

The Huntingdonshire pattern of inclosure (see Plan 8.1), whereby there were a small number of awards pre-1793, but with the bulk of inclosures taking place during the course of the Napoleonic Wars and the remaining few parishes following on later is also broadly the pattern found in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire — three counties that Turner tends to group together as sharing characteristics that set them apart from the other places of high open field arable. That this is so is not surprising as parts of each of these three counties share other features in common, such as an underlying tendency for dispersed settlement and areas of old enclosed farmlands.

The scale of the changes, as traced on the maps of the period, testifies to the amount of open field arable that existed in the Ouse Valley parishes

before inclosure. However, land already enclosed by the 1750s was also significant, especially in relation to its distribution and ubiquity. Patterns of land ownership, as recorded by allotments at inclosure varied from parish to parish, but the smaller parishes were noticeably more ‘close’ than larger ones. The proportion of land allotted in lieu of rectorial, vicarial or prebentarial tithes was relatively high; added to which many of the landowners along the Ouse Valley were either Oxford or Cambridge colleges or ecclesiastical institutions. In terms of lay ownership, some gentry owners had the larger part of some parishes, but there were a number of County gentry who owned estates across a number of parishes. Table 8.3

Plan 8.1 Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley Inclosure by Period

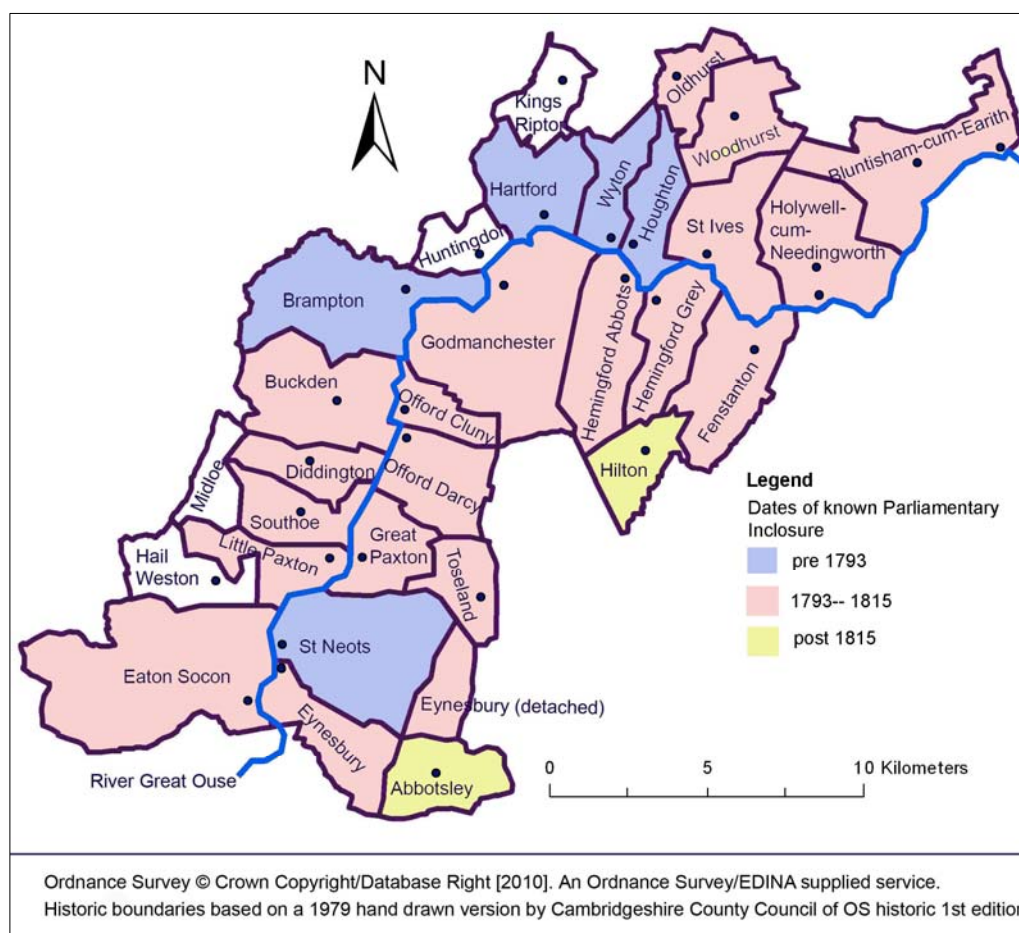


Table 8.3: Parish Surveys and Enclosure Maps Showing Degrees of Enclosure

PARISH	SURVEY	DATE	OPEN FIELD SYSTEM	EXISTING ENCLOSURE PATTERN
Abbotsley	Inclosure	1838	x3 major + x3 minor fields	Small enclosures around single township site
Bluntisham-cum-Earith	Inclosure	1814	x3 open fields plus common fen and heath land	Small enclosures around habitation at townships (x2) plus Queens grounds, Plus enclosed farms of Barn Field and Pryors Field.
Brampton	Estate Plan	1757	Indicates x3 open fields associated with Brampton Manor itself and x1 field associated with lost hamlet of Houghton. Also, various commons etc.	Indicates a number of existing small enclosures associated with habitation and along riverbank in places.
	Inclosure	1772	Number of common fields not known. Allotments often small and clustered in Township and at site of deserted hamlet of Houghton. Also excludes Portholme Meadow	Evidence of small closes associated with habitation within township. Brampton Wood shown and Harty Grounds (medieval assarts).
Buckden	Inclosure	1813	Number of common fields not recorded.	High incidence of previous enclosure around township and lost hamlets of Stirtlow and Hardwick. West side of parish well enclosed based on medieval assarts.
Diddington	Inclosure	1797	Common fields not named but likely x3. Evidence of possible early park.	Small enclosures around homesteads at Diddington and part of Boughton. Some evidence of earlier assarts in western portion of parish.
Eaton Socon	Inclosure	1799	x24 open fields + x13 commons or greens. Many of these open fields and greens were small and lay within areas of old enclosure.	Small enclosures around habitation and high degrees of enclosure on the western and northern parts of the parish
Eynesbury	Estate Plan of Eynesbury Manor	1757	Across x3 open fields with x1 common meadow	Some small enclosures probably associated with the township
	Inclosure	1800	x3 major fields	Small enclosures around Eynesbury township site plus enclosed farm at Puttocks Hardwick
	Tithe	1837	None	Enclosed farms at Weald and Caldecote

End of page 1 of Table 8.3

Table 8.3 continues...

PARISH	SURVEY	DATE	OPEN FIELD SYSTEM	EXISTING ENCLOSURE PATTERN
Fenstanton	Estate Plan	1777	x7 principal fields, plus x3 smaller field, possible in demesne. Also records village Green, another Common, meadow and fen land. Furlong boundaries recorded.	Many small closes around homesteads and Fenstanton Green.
	Inclosure	1810	Comprehensive enclosure, including Green and other common land. Streams canalised and many roads straightened since 1777. Very few pre-inclosure boundaries have survived outside those of old enclosures.	Old enclosures as recorded on 1777 plan.
Godmanchester	Inclosure	1803	Award indicates complex open field/common land system. Previous field boundaries not recorded. Two large commons retained.	The Township's habitation structured around site of Roman <i>civitas</i> with system of enclosures recorded separately. Mostly these are old enclosures associated with homesteads.
Great Paxton with Toseland	Farm plan	1792	x3 major fields plus x1 smaller (also, part of Toseland field within parish?). Meadow also indicated.	Some existing enclosures associated with habitation.
	Inclosure	1811	Post inclosure boundaries only recorded for Great Paxton. x4 fields recorded for Toseland.	In Great Paxton existing enclosures were closely associated with elements of habitation, except for a small cluster of closes on the northwestern margin. In Toseland there was a higher incidence of enclosures many associated with ancient woodland.
Hemingford Abbots	Inclosure	1806	Number of open fields not recorded. Allotments well away from village centre to the south. Hemingford Abbots Meadow enclosed	Large number of existing enclosures in north of parish along village lanes (not just associated with habitation). Further blocks of enclosed land among open fields to the south.
Hemingford Grey	Inclosure	1801	Number of open fields not recorded. Allotments close to the village centre. Hemingford Grey Meadow enclosed.	Small number of existing enclosures around village centre closely associated with habitation. Blocks of existing enclosure amongst the former common fields predominantly to the south and west.

End of page 2 of Table 8.3

Table 8.3 continues..

PARISH	SURVEY	DATE	OPEN FIELD SYSTEM	EXISTING ENCLOSURE PATTERN
Hertford	Estate plan	1757	Indicates that whole furlongs tenanted in Westfield and near to Sapley Grounds, where an old wood hedge represented (?)	Few existing enclosures represented, but a few furlongs appear hedged.
	Inclosure	1771	Post-inclosure boundaries only. Comparison with 1757 suggests that many land holdings rationalised rather than re-allotted.	Existing enclosures around habitation and near river. Northeast of parish has single farmstead with possible medieval assarts.
Hilton	Village plan	1778	Common fields indicated but not differentiated	Shows old enclosures associated with habitation around green
	Farm plan	1790	Farm strips distributed between three common fields	Shows a few enclosures belonging to farm.
	Inclosure	1840	Post enclosure pattern of fields only.	Old enclosures as 1778 plan
Holywell-cum-Needingworth	Estate plan	1764	Shows strips distributed within the common fields, often as whole furlongs. Identifies in general terms area covered by open fields, fen, meadow and heath.	Indicates limits of existing enclosures, which are mainly associated with habitation.
	Inclosure	1800	Shows boundaries of the new allotments without reference to the previous open field and furlong boundaries. Occasional furlongs shown in 1764 persist as closes.	Shows old enclosures corresponding to those in 1764. Mostly associated with habitation, but occasional closes in common areas especially related to Duke of Manchester's estate.
Houghton with Wyton	Inclosure	1773/4	Shows boundaries of the new allotments without reference to the previous open field and furlong boundaries.	Shows existing enclosures east to west in south of parish in and either side of the two village centres. Some evidence of earlier irregular closes in Houghton open fields, especially in north of parish; maybe relic medieval assarts.
Little Paxton	Inclosure	1812	x3 common open fields clearly marked, together with allotment boundaries. Open fields in eastern portion of parish around village settlement. Western portion of parish shows woodland.	Old enclosures clearly marked around habitation elements. Western portion of parish shows enclosed farms.
Offord Cluny	Inclosure	1800/06	New enclosures shown without reference to open field/furlong boundaries.	Old enclosures limited to clustered habitation of township and river islands only.

End of page 3 of Table 8.3

Table 8.3 continues..

PARISH	SURVEY	DATE	OPEN FIELD SYSTEM	EXISTING ENCLOSURE PATTERN
Offord Darcy	Plan of town and home enclosures	1793 /4	Records names and marks the relative locations of x7 open fields.	Shows the existing village enclosures and a number of enclosed farms.
	Inclosure	1811	Records the boundaries of the new allotments without reference to previous open fields.	Marks extent of old enclosures as in 1794.
Oldhurst	Inclosure	1803	Records the boundaries of the new allotments without reference to previous open fields.	Old enclosures associated with habitation with some further ones to east of but adjacent to township.
St Neots	Estate map of Sir Stephen Anderson's land	1757	Part of St Neots' common fields (C. 34 acres)	Priory Farm enclosed with possible wholly owned common field (c.170a); Hardwick Farm enclosed with possible wholly owned common field (c.175a).
	Estate plan, Manor of St Neots	1757	x13 common fields	Some small enclosures around the township habitation elements plus extensive enclosures at the Bargroves.
	Inclosure	1770	x18 open fields (some subdivisions) plus x3 commons	Some small enclosures around the township habitation elements plus extensive enclosures at the Bargroves.
Slepe (St Ives)	Parish map	1728	Shows x3 open fields with furlong names/boundaries and two smaller fields called Wigan that may have been enclosed, all north of the Huntingdon to Ely road.	Shows enclosed landscape south of Huntingdon to Ely road. Burgage plots within the settlement. Gated closes between the township habitation and the east/west road.
	Inclosure	1808	Boundaries for allotments north of the Ely to Huntingdon road.	Shows Wigan enclosures within area of previously open fields. Old enclosures south of Huntingdon to Ely road confirms map of 1728.
Southoe	Estate map	1801	Not recorded.	Fully enclosed landscape with no provenance.
Woodhurst	Estate map	1865	Pre-inclosure not recorded	Fully enclosed landscape. Closes associated with habitation may be old.

End of Table 8.3

COMMENTARY

Settlement patterns within the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley are complex and although it is possible to discern a number of themes it would be rash to suggest that any one typifies settlement pattern generally within this clearly defined sub-region. Of course, there are examples of settlements that prior to Parliamentary Inclosure consisted of a nucleated habitation sitting within a system of three common fields but, even so, in most instances such settlements lie against or overlay another pattern of dispersed settlement. Dispersed settlement patterns were in some cases more ancient than the planned villages and open fields of the twelfth century, but elsewhere these dispersed elements are more modern in form. These settlements were closely related to the fields that surrounded them and what this study has also highlighted is the variety of the historic field systems (enclosed and open) within the Ouse valley sub-region.

It is as difficult to produce a generalised typology for field systems in the Ouse Valley as it is for settlement dispersal patterns. This is reflected in Postgate's finding that field systems in Cambridgeshire (a county similar in part to Huntingdonshire) are complex in their general format as well as their antecedents (Postgate 1973, 322). This study has shown that the organisation and disposition of fields systems in Huntingdonshire can be complex, and it is suggested that their morphology can best be understood in the context of land management issues — such as the cultivation of crops, the feeding of animals, or the production of raw materials. This emphasises the interdependence of settlement attributes, like the distribution and density of homesteads, to field morphology and topography. Thus field systems are a structural element of a settlement's spatial reality. There is, it

is suggested, an intrinsic relationship between field systems and settlement morphology.

This relationship manifests itself in a number of ways. For example, prior to Parliamentary Inclosure, nucleated settlements might expand into their township closes (and thereby become more nucleated), but could not realistically be expected to encroach too far into the common fields, or radically modify their morphology into a more dispersed one. However, following inclosure the situation changed and with the creation of farms owned in severalty parcels of land away from traditional settlement centres became available for development during the course of the nineteenth century and beyond. Examples of completely detached developments are rare, although New Town at Huntingdon is one. More frequently, it was more a case of greater areas of land becoming available on the outskirts of existing places — as happened at St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey. During the course of the first part of the twentieth century most places (including some of the smaller villages) saw the laying out of council house estates as well.

A settlement's morphology is best understood when each of the elements and their socio-economic context are taken into consideration: for example, the disposition of habitation, the effects of agrarian management on landscape features such as the fields, meadows, and woodlands, as well as the cultural movements that have contributed to the socio-economic progress of settlement. This holistic approach to what settlement means sometimes struggles to be recognised in England. In Scotland, by way of contrast, an observer would admire the human spirit in the landscape not just by the quality of the built environment but also by its 'policies' — the physical evidence of human agency (Buchan 2004 [first published in 1923], 20). Likewise, the traveller in past times, emerging from the hill top forest

into the valley of the Ouse would have understood the distant settlement, not just in the homesteads, barns and mills, but also by the fields and coppices surrounding them. Planning and developing new settlement elements in the historical environment, it is argued, will work better when a cognitive understanding of spatial relationships of this kind is more widely recognised — thus a field is not just a blank canvass for a housing estate or industrial park, but an integral part of an ancient settlement only partly represented by the village houses adjacent to it.

Diversity underpins the character of the settlements of the Ouse Valley and should be a significant consideration when planners and the community evaluate any proposed changes to it. The socio-economic context, as well as the physical impact of the different morphological elements on the contemporary landscape, helps to inform contemporary decision-making about future development. Local communities, also, will benefit from an understanding of how stages in the development of a settlement's morphology have come about, and what they mean for maintaining the *sense of place*. This is not just about preserving the past: understanding the morphogenesis of existing settlements should help to inform the design of future development. Contemporary neighbourhoods need, of course, to reflect the aspirations of their times, but they should also respect the achievements of the past

The interpretive narrative establishes the facts needed to evaluate 'significance' for those responsible for the management of the historic environment (a theme returned to in the final chapter). In making actual planning decisions, practitioners need as detailed an analysis as possible to ensure that the value and significance of what already exists is not compromised by what is to come. The more specific the issue under

investigation can be made the better the chance of success. How this kind of historic analysis can progress into an understanding of the contemporary landscape in one specific locality is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 9: ST NEOTS — DISCERNING THE SENSE OF PLACE

“[St Neots]..is a large, well-built town, situated on the river Ouse, over which there is a fine stone bridge, which makes it very commodious to the whole county; for as coals are brought to this place by water, they are conveyed from hence to all the adjacent parts. Its church is a very large, strong, and handsome building, and the steeple is esteemed a masterpiece in its kind.”¹

¹ *A New Display of the Beauties of England*, R Goadby, Vol 2, 2nd edition, London 1776.

INTRODUCTION

The modern town of St Neots presents an urbanised morphology in an area where the original settlement pattern was a rural one. The development of dominant urban morphologies out of rural morphologies is a significant issue today for many settlements, which needs explaining and analysing. At a time when the need for housing, and the services and employment opportunities that this entails, is growing, local communities wishing to preserve their *sense of place* find this challenging: nowhere more so along the Ouse Valley than at St Neots. Whilst, in the previous three chapters the analysis of settlement in the St Neots locality has concentrated on its historic origins and early development, in this chapter attention is turned to the impact of more recent changes to the contemporary settlement form.

St Neots was a rural settlement that expanded slowly from the latter part of the nineteenth century onwards, expanding into neighbouring settlements in the process. In the local government reorganisation in 1965 it was confirmed as a town designated for planned expansion under the post war scheme to resettle Londoners outside the Metropolis (Campbell 1974, 6)². The town as it now exists is a modern synthesis combining a number of previously autonomous historic settlements into what is functionally one administrative entity. This has created a challenge for those tasked with protecting its historic environment because of the tension between the developing morphological needs of the modern town and the historic morphological pattern of its previously autonomous parts.

It might (with some justification) be argued that the extensive development that has taken place within St Neots (and by which the

² Within the plan there was a commitment to house 2,000 families under the Town Development Act 1952.

modern town has been created) means that it is no longer a rural settlement and, therefore, has no place in a contemporary discussion about rural settlement morphology. Whilst there is some merit in this argument (particularly in socio-economic terms) it is not true that the more recent morphology has completely supplanted the earlier ones. The new St Neots is still heavily dependent for its structure and self-identity on the older core settlements and it is in these respects in particular that an historic analysis retains its significance.

The relationship between successive morphological periods is an interesting and important one. The situation at St Neots is an example of a later urban morphology that has been superimposed upon earlier settlement morphology, originating in a medieval rural economy. In terms of managing the historic environment, both morphologies need to be understood and accommodated. St Neots demonstrates many of the issues discussed in Chapter 2 concerning the transformation of rural morphologies into urban ones and the role of industrialisation in the process. This chapter examines the modern spatial settlement form of the town, identifies preceding morphologies, and looks at the nature and origins of residual landscape features as a way of exploring the impact of post-Second World War expansion on the *sense of place*.

NARRATIVE

Deconstructing the Contemporary Landscape

A key issue in the quest to understand the contemporary landscape of St Neots and its immediate environs is the extent to which past landscape features survive within the present day morphology. The shape of the contemporary settlement results from the development decisions made

since the 1960s, when the challenge facing the planners was a familiar one — how to provide the homes and employment opportunities required and the infrastructure to support this. Space had to be found not only for residential development but also for industrial and commercial ventures, shopping and retail outlets, schools, medical and other services for the health and safety of the expanding population, and the transport infrastructure³. Essentially, it was how these elements were related spatially that determined both how the town's socio-economic environment would work and how well the original historic settlement pattern would be integrated within the newly planned town.

The Modern Spatial Form

The spatial layout of post 1965 St Neots can be seen from Plan 9.1, which illustrates the different post-expansion zones and how they relate to the topography and the older existing settlement centres. The limits of the town was set at the new A1 to the west; the east coast railway line from London to the east; the county boundary to the south; and the settlement of Little Paxton to the north — a roughly rectangular area with its long axis running north/south. The river Great Ouse creates a green corridor lying about midway between the limits set by the A1 trunk road and the railway line along the same north/south alignment. The settlement area is also bisected along its east/west axis by the Cambridge Road that crosses the river at an historic crossing point. More recently a second bridge has been built to carry the southern bypass that forms the southerly boundary to the town. The chosen boundaries for the town created a somewhat restricted space in development terms made more inflexible by the river. Attempts to

³ The extent of the expansion can be realised by the population growth of the pre-2010 parish which rose from 1,130 in mid 1951-61 to 7,210 in mid 1961-71, and was projected to rise to 33,000 by 1986 (in fact never achieved) [Campbell 1974, 6].

relate the post-war developments to the St Neots' market square (adopted as the principle focus for the town) has marginalised the previous village centres of Eynesbury and Eaton Socon, which have both been isolated from their historic hinterlands.

The nineteen-sixties' expansion of St Neots was designed, in accordance with then current planning theory, to assign different types of development to specific zones (for example, residential, industrial etc), which would be connected through a tailored system of access routes. This process, however, proved difficult to implement at St Neots because of the topographical structure of the town. In particular, the disjuncture created by the river corridor itself, as well as the straightjacket effect caused by the physical barriers at the major eastern and western boundaries created by the north/south A1 arterial road and the east coast railway. The result has been that many of the development zones are small in extent and at a number of points run together with poor physical separation. Access routes, that in other 'new town' situations are usually very clearly defined and typically *create* the divisions between zones are, in St Neots, often placed *within* zones or consist of poorly re-engineered elements of the pre-expansion routes that pass through older (usually residential) areas⁴. The consequent overcrowding in the built environment affects both the new development and the residual earlier morphology about equally, but is alleviated to some extent by the often quite generous areas of open space. The Riverside Park, Priory Park, Green End, and along the Hen Brook where a green corridor separates the medieval parishes of Eynesbury and St Neots. Despite the drawbacks in spatial planning and the considerable increase in the volume

⁴ Milton Keynes is, perhaps, the example *par excellence* within the broader region for this type of development. Designed in the 1950's, it is still being built to the master plan.

of the built environment, the pre-expansion settlement morphology of the area is still clearly discernable.

This newer development is now, of course, also part of the historic landscape — houses that were being built in the 1960s are now as old as many that then existed in the village settlements that form part of St Neots today. However, the two are part of separate morphogenic periods, and the development belonging to post-war St Neots often lies awkwardly within a landscape that was created as part of a pre-urbanised rural settlement pattern. The one is not more valid than the other, but the issue is how well these potentially disparate elements work together to give the town plan and its townscape the integrity it needs to function well for those living and working there. In the case of St Neots there is arguably sufficient disparity in architectural style, grain and form between the two phases of development to cause concern. An idea of the issues is illustrated by Figure 9.1, which shows the plot form and building types for St Neots' Market Square and late nineteenth century expansion compared to one of the post 1965 residential areas. The typical burgage plots of the medieval plan and the grid pattern of the nineteenth century are in marked contrast to the distinctive form of the modern.

In order to manage the town's historic environment effectively it is necessary to both distinguish the earlier morphology and understand how it relates to the town's current design. As was discussed in Chapter 2 many settlements that in their origin depended on a rural economy based on agriculture have become increasingly dependent upon a non-agrarian economic system during the course of the twentieth century. This shift has resulted in many more people who live in rural areas being divorced socially as well as economically from the economy of the broader landscape that

they inhabit. Indeed, for many the countryside and its settlements have become dormitory settlements for a population whose employment is not only unrelated to the land, but often occurs at great distances. The origins of an urbanised economic base in St Neots can be traced back, certainly, to the later years of the nineteenth century and it gathered pace exponentially during the course of the twentieth. This process of urbanisation has demanded changes in settlement morphology that can often be in conflict with the rural morphologies within which they become embedded, and in some cases — as at St Neots — completely transform them.

The process of urbanisation that has occurred at St Neots has had the effect of divorcing much of the built aspects of the older settlements from their hinterlands as well as overwriting the local field patterns that originally formed the setting for them. In actuality, the nucleated habitation elements of the historic settlement pattern have largely been incorporated into the new townscape, whilst the dispersed elements (such as surviving farmsteads) have been assigned to the rural parishes adjacent. Older settlement centres have frequently been squeezed by newer development that has not been well integrated with the older habitation elements — a sure sign of stress in the built environment. The effects of urbanisation can be seen in the later stages of the historic sequence that is described in the following section.

More recently, the built environment has been allowed to breach the eastern limits of the town beyond the main line railway and two new neighbourhoods are in the process of being developed at Love's Farm and Wintringham Park; with these developments the process of urbanisation is continuing beyond the previously established limits of the town. The Boundary Commission has now incorporated these areas into the town,

transferring it to the St Neots' Town Council from St Neots' Rural Civil Parish. This decision has, after consultation with the local community, paved the way for a major re-drawing of parish boundaries from April 2010. As a result, St Neots' town boundary has expanded to the south and east, whilst the rural portions of St Neots and Eynesbury have amalgamated with the Parish of Abbotsley (DCLG Huntingdonshire Parish Order 2009). Plan

9.2

Plan 9.1 St Neots' Town Expansion Periods

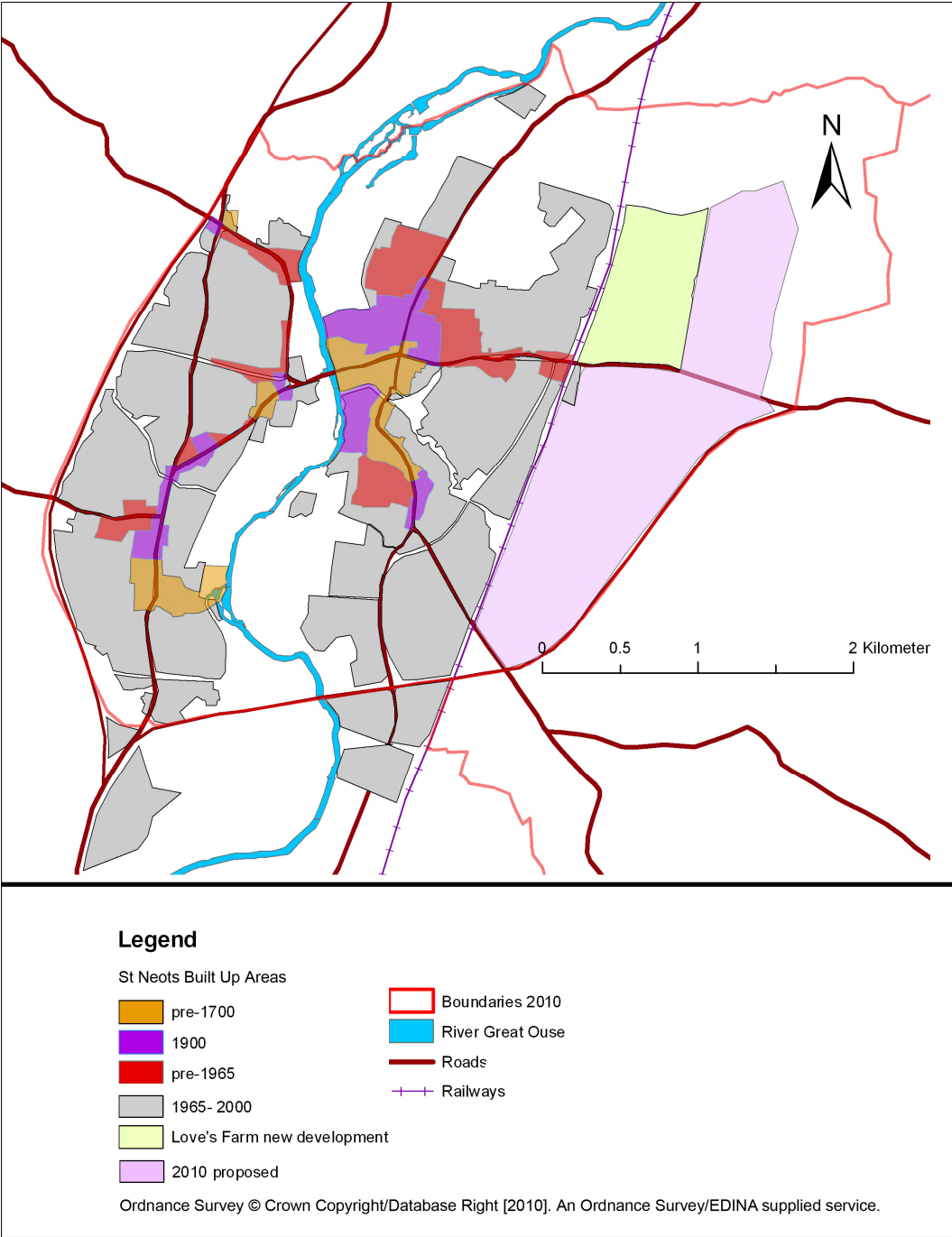


Figure 9. 1 Plot Form and Building Type Comparisons: St Neots



St Neots' Market Square, south side plots



St Neots' Market Square, south side frontage



Avenue Road/ Kings Road plots



Avenue Road/ Kings Road building types

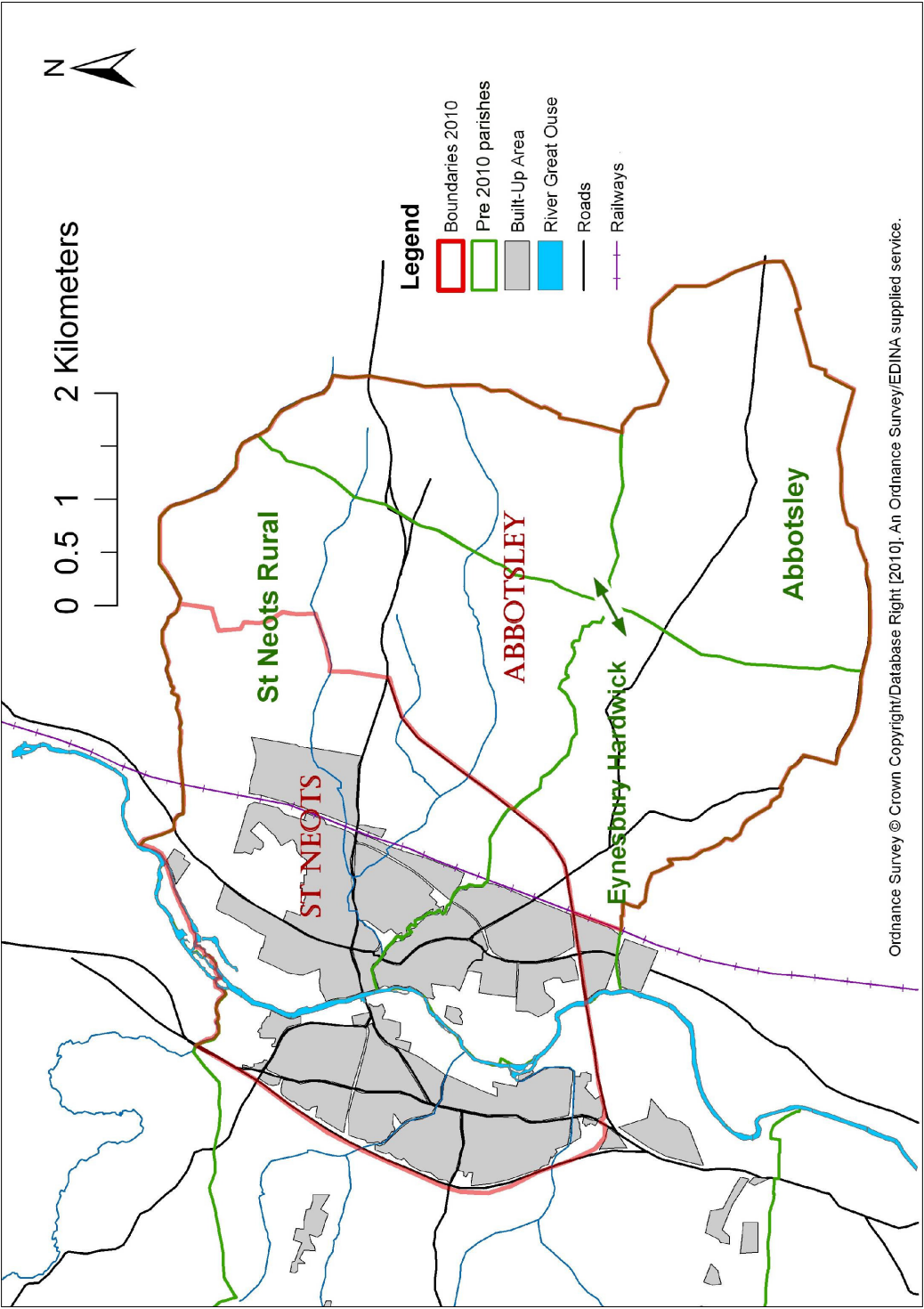


St Neots 'post-1965 housing development



St Neots' post-1965 housing development
Image courtesy of Google Maps 2010

Plan 9.2 Revised Civil Parish Boundaries, St Neots' District, 2010



Evolution of the Historic Settlement Form

What follows draws upon the historic analysis of settlement in the St Neots area worked out in the previous chapters. It provides the historic context for the more recent expansion of settlement described above, as well as the background for understanding the analysis of residual landscape features that follow.

Pre-Parliamentary Inclosure Morphology

The historic settlement pattern for St Neots and its surrounding area was established by the end of the twelfth century and altered little until the nineteenth century. The basic settlement pattern (see Plan 6.3) persisted even though social and economic conditions changed within the time frame. On the other hand, these changes, with new opportunities and developing relationships within the communities that subsisted within these settlements, caused incremental changes to details of their morphology. However, the exact form of these settlements is known only by how they appear later. In villages like Eynesbury and Eaton Socon, hemmed in by their open fields and the river, the changes to the built environment were mostly a matter of infilling of township enclosures or encroachment onto the village greens — but generally, the open grained effect created by widely spaced buildings and irregular curtilages persisted into the nineteenth century. As at St Neots, building styles and materials of all ages are represented, but from the seventeenth century these were mostly of buff or red brick with tile or (later) slate roofs. (Plate 9.1)

Some change events, like the dissolution of St Neots' Priory, reflected national life beyond the local community, whilst other happenings (such as the private enclosure of land) were grounded in local conditions and decision-making. What is clear is that initially, enclosure took place

incrementally over an extended period of time; but the effect of this evolutionary process on the landscape and the built environment is not always easy to track in detail (Williamson 2000, 59). However, on occasions and as records improved — in particular as spatial representations such as plans and maps became more abundant — the cumulative effect of these changes can be seen (see for example, the Anderson estate map [HRO: M233] and the Earl of Sandwich's estate plans [HRO: 223/13-18], both dated 1757).

Post Parliamentary Inclosure Settlement

Of especial importance for understanding more recent changes in the local landscape are the effects of the enclosure movement. The transition from open to enclosed field systems signified a shift in tenurial structure that facilitated expansion of the built environment. This made development land available more readily than would otherwise have been possible, as Hoskins has demonstrated in relationship to a number of Midland towns (Hoskins 1985, 279-289) and Taylor within village settings (Taylor 1983, 214).

A series of maps and plans illustrate the progress of enclosure in local parishes during this crucial period. For the parishes of St Neots, Map 9.1 and Map 9.2 show the landscape during the final stages of enclosure by Parliamentary Act in 1770⁵. Taken together, this series of maps and plans illustrate the creation of the pattern of fields for the area that can be seen on the 1st edition OS map, Map 9.3.

Enclosures that were recorded on the Anderson map of 1757 largely coincided with parish land that had previously been the demesne land of the

⁵ See also, Eaton Socon in 1799, Map 7.32 (HRO: Map 3425), and Eynesbury in 1800, Map 7.34 (HRO: PM 2/6).

priory of St Neots (Page et al 1974b, 340). A series of plans, also dated 1757, of the holdings of the manorial copyholders and freeholders of the neighbouring manors of St Neots and Eynesbury (both owned by the Earl of Sandwich) show how complex the distribution of these lands were in the multiple open fields that then existed on both manors. In the Earl of Sandwich's manor of St Neots, farms were distributed in a complicated system of open fields and strips, Plate 9.2 (HRO: M223/10). On the Anderson estate most land was enclosed early and the few remaining open fields, being demesne, could be enclosed at the discretion of the landowner himself (and soon after 1757 actually were). There is also evidence that medieval farms and hamlets that lay beyond the main village centres within the three parishes of Eaton Socon, Eynesbury and St Neots were prone to early enclosure (see below). As in other Ouse Valley settlements, tenements within the main centres of habitation were nearly always associated with small closes as well as the homestead toft.

Within a few years of the turn of the nineteenth century the landscape within the boundaries of the modern town of St Neots was an enclosed one. But, many of these enclosures were old by this time, and at least some very old, and it is possible that quite a few preserved the boundaries of the furlongs that were once within the open fields. Fields created by Parliamentary Inclosure were usually (but not always) larger and more regular than those of earlier, piecemeal enclosure, and the former largely obliterated the older pattern of furlong boundaries. Consequently there is a diverse feel to the grain of the land between areas enclosed under the different methods. However, as noted above, the end result was that the creation of discrete plots in single ownership eased the potential for a

transfer of land use from agriculture to other purposes, including built development.

Nineteenth Century Landscape

During the course of the nineteenth century, in country towns such as St Neots, an increase in population, the effects of industrial production, and raised expectations in the standards of public health encouraged expansion of the built environment (Cambs CC 2002). The effect of these developments on the landscape becomes evident by the time of the 1st edition OS 6" and 25" maps.

Industrialisation is often equated with urbanisation and there can indeed be a close relationship between the two. However, much of the rural agrarian economy also became industrialised during the course of the nineteenth century without transforming rural settlement into urban settlement. Therefore, even though elements of industrial activity became established within the agrarian economy it did not reach a tipping point until later in the twentieth century, when the effects of an urbanised economy had already greatly accelerated the process of rural decline. It is possible that once agricultural production (and the way that the land is managed and exploited) became as industrialised and automated as it did in the latter part of the twentieth century, then agricultural industrialisation on its own would have resulted in the decay of traditional rural settlements — but in fact it was never given this chance. However, the level of industrialisation as experienced in places such as St Neots and its environs in the nineteenth century was arguably a further example of agricultural improvement, rather than an agent of urbanisation.

Goods and services had been transported into and out of St Neots by river since 1630 when the Great Ouse navigation was opened (Page et al

1974b, 338), but in 1850 with the coming of the railway, St Neots was connected to a burgeoning national transport system that slowly superseded river transport (Wickes 1995, 125). During the course of the nineteenth century St Neots (and to a lesser extent its surrounding villages) started to expand and new housing was being erected at the edges of the settlement. The 6" OS map of 1890 shows this process in progress. Map 9.4 It also records steam driven corn mills, breweries, a gas works, and engineering works. Eynesbury and St Neots had by this time become continuously built up, although Green End was still a separate hamlet to the east, as Eaton Ford was to the west just across the river. Eaton Socon remained a separate settlement at this period. Thus, although the nineteenth century industrial and transport developments were discernable they were clearly embedded into the earlier settlement morphology and did not seriously alter the general configuration of the settlement pattern for the area.

Thus the progression of settlement form since that established during the course of the twelfth century really did not change the overall pattern — and in fact this remained the case until the 1950s. The modern morphology of St Neots (see Plan 9.1), which has absorbed and subordinated that of the pre-urbanised landscape, is like an urban matrix within which the older, fossilized settlement elements subsist.

Plate 9. 1 St Neots' District Built Environment



Brook Street: mixed period, medieval to nineteenth century



Eaton Socon: nineteenth century terrace



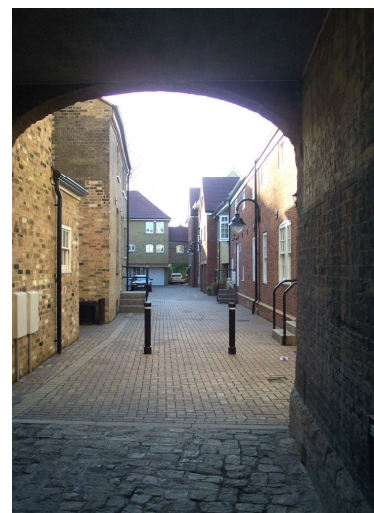
Eynesbury: post WWII council housing



St Neots: Inter-War council housing

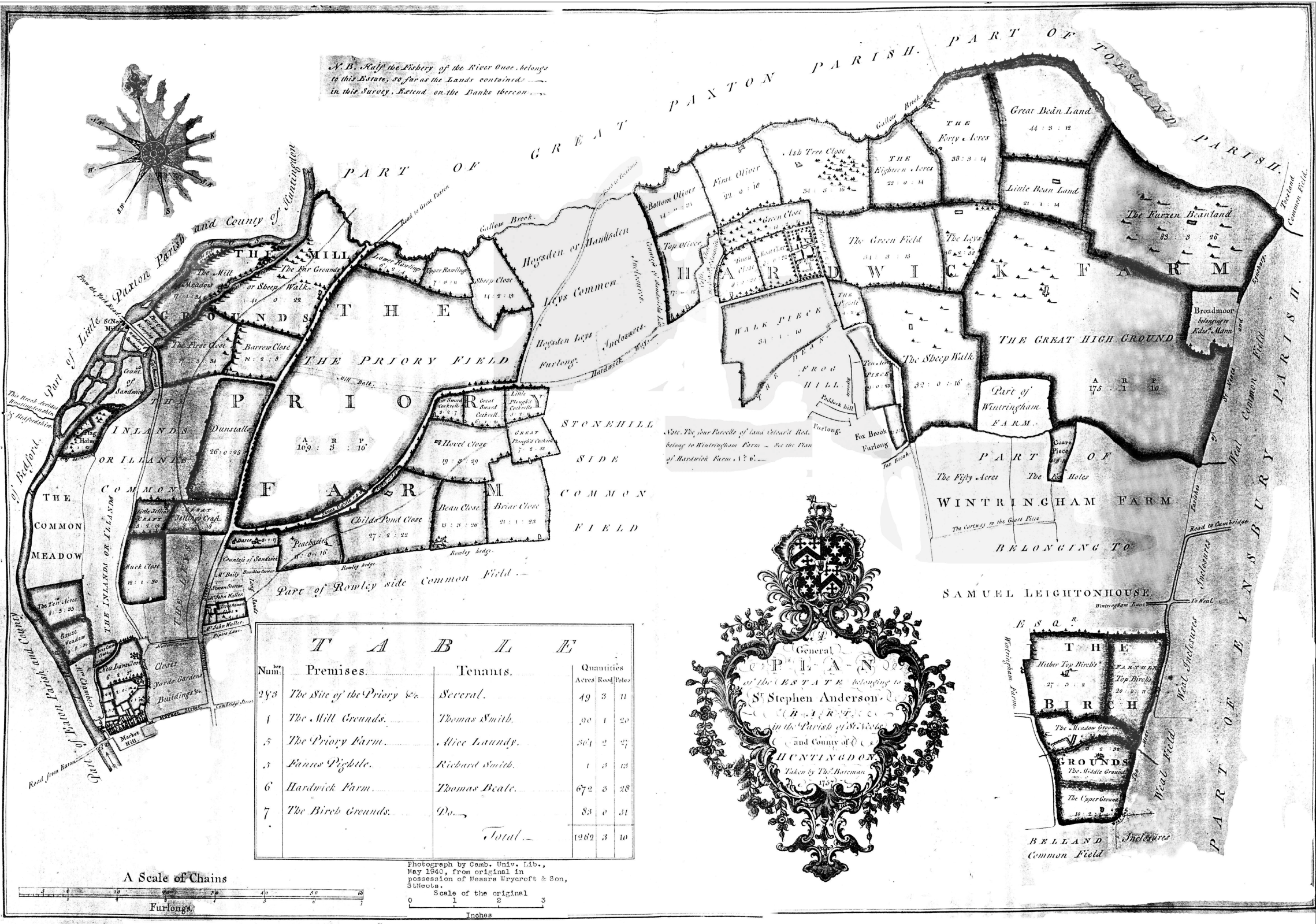


Hen Brook: back of burgage plots, late twentieth century residential development



St Neots' Market Square: contemporary refurbishment of Paine's Brewery

Map 9.1 St Neots: Anderson Estate Map, 1757



Map 9.2 St Neots: Draft Enclosure Map, Manor of St Neots, 1770



Map 9.3 St Neots' District, OS 6" 1890

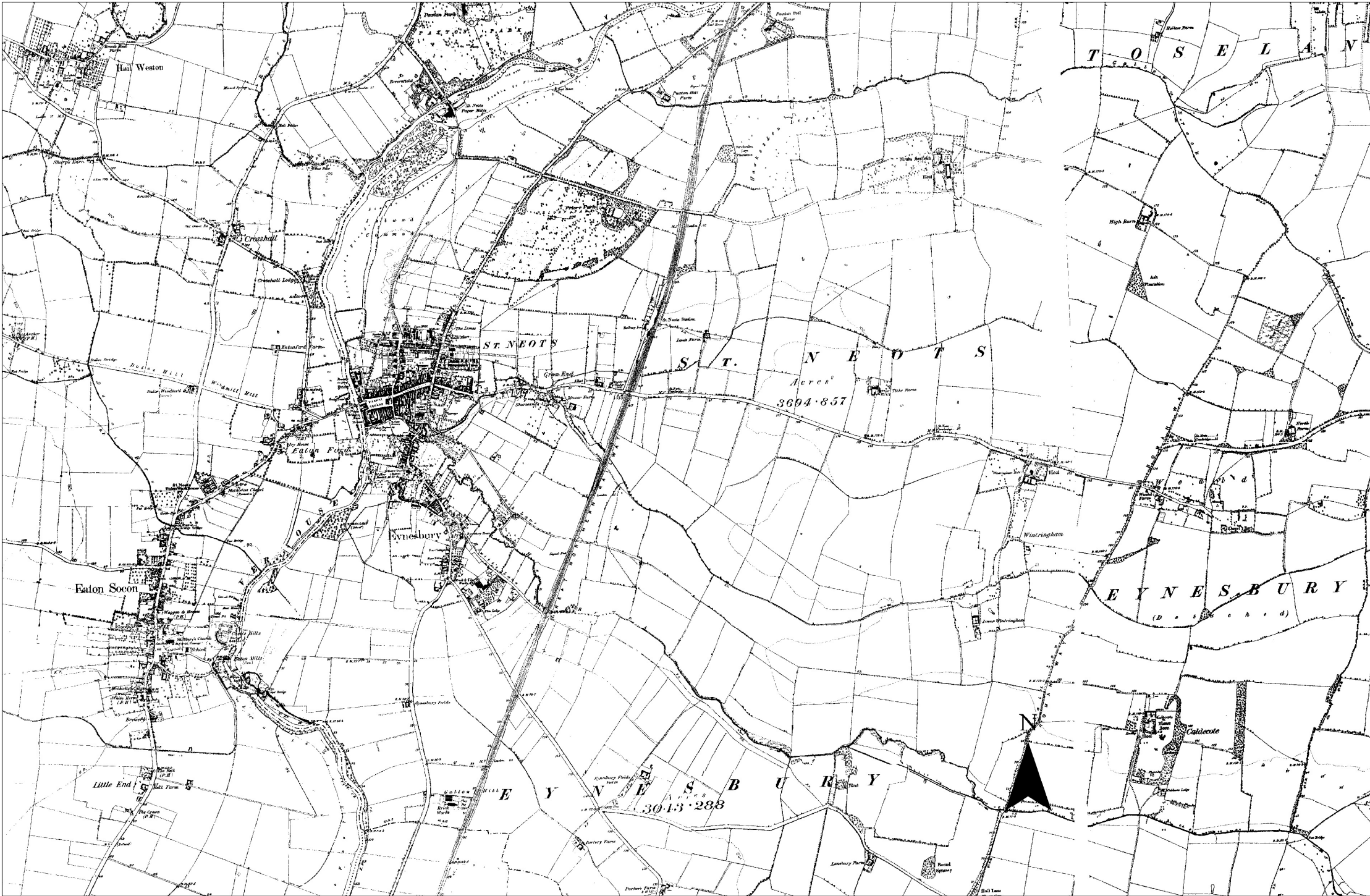
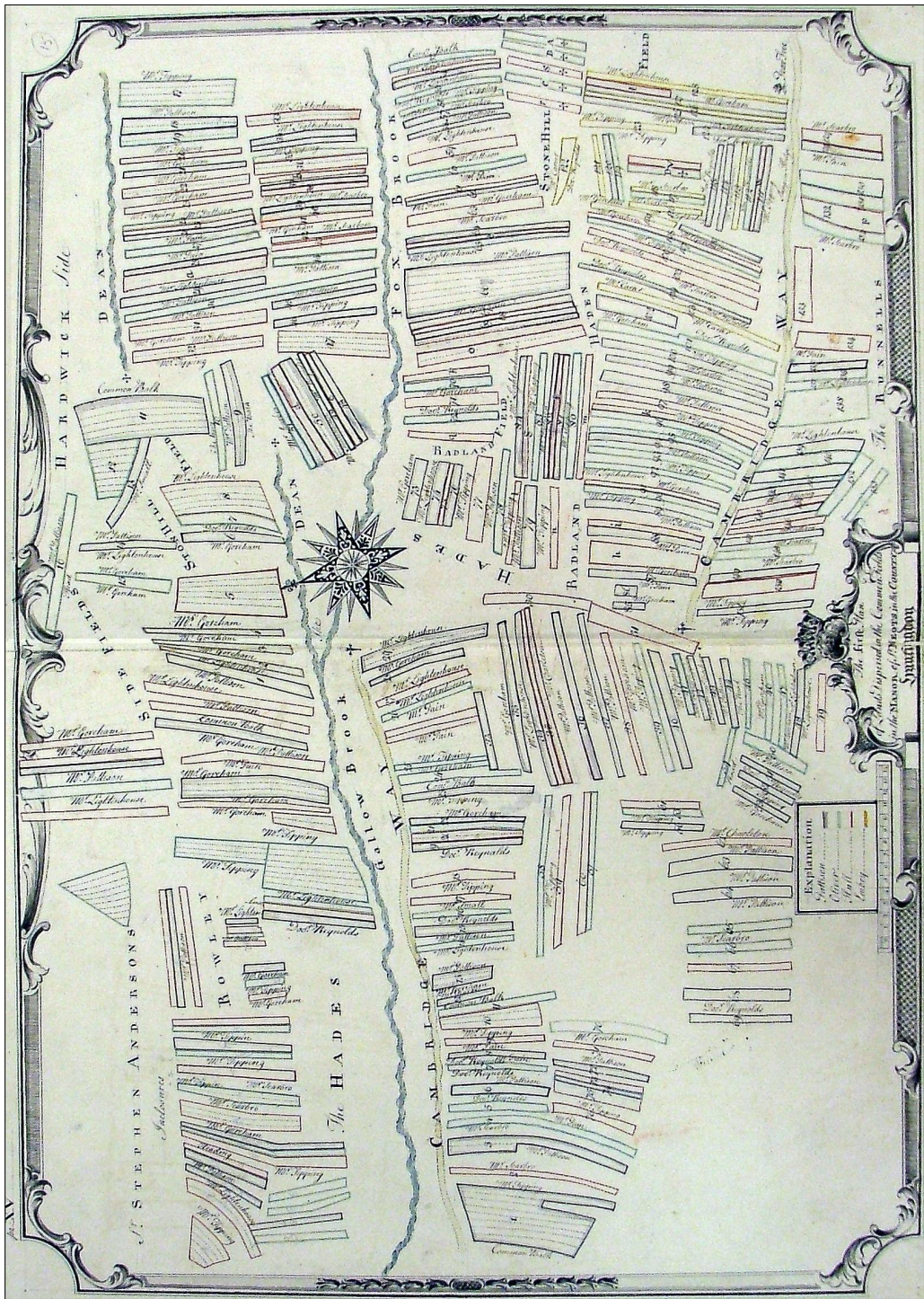
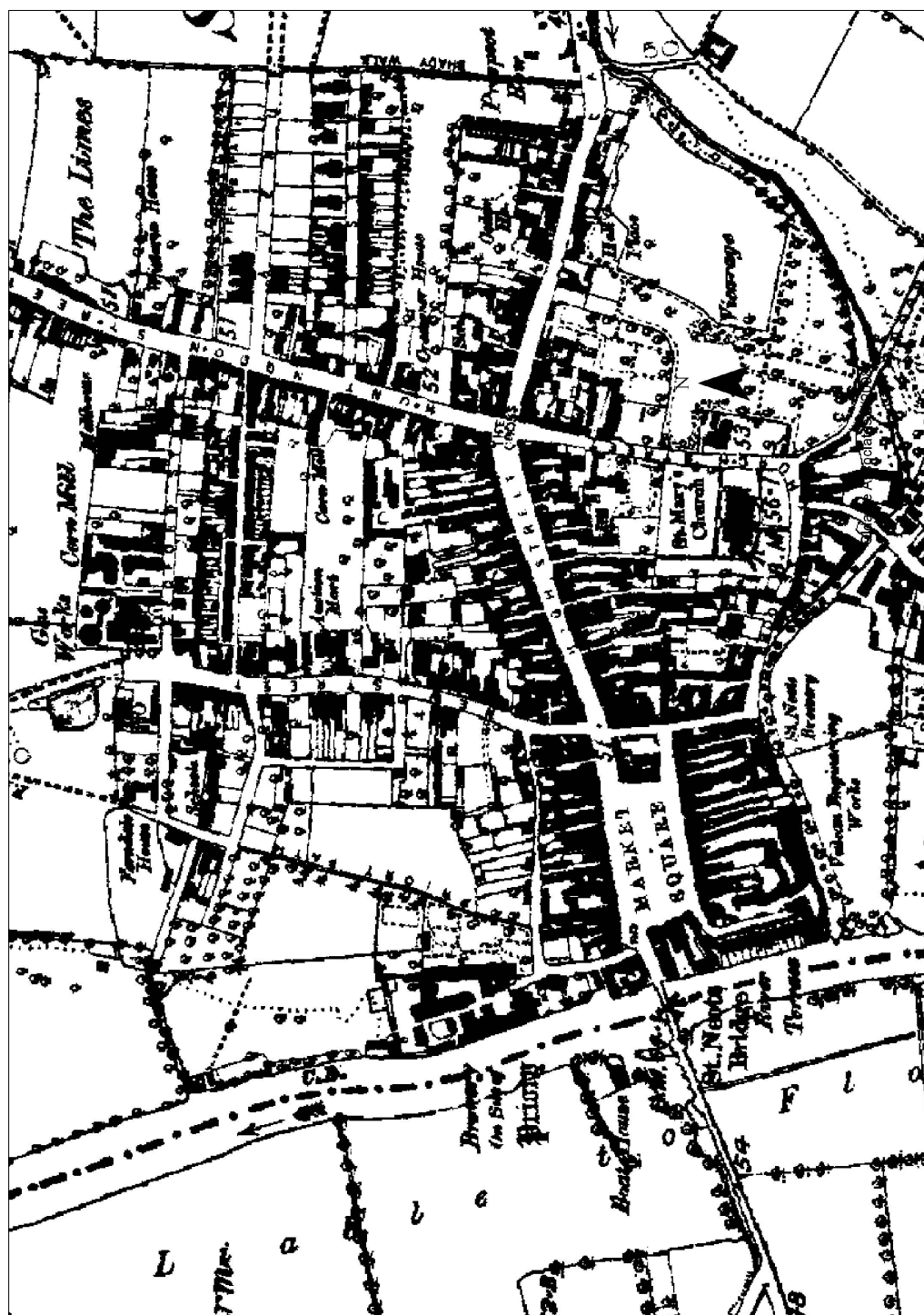


Plate 9.2 Earl of Sandwich Estate, Manor of St Neots, 1757 – detail



Map 9.4 St Neots: OS 6 inch, 1st edition, 1890 – detail



Residual Landscape Features

St Neots in its modern form has areas of older, layered morphologies as well as quite extensive areas where almost complete clearance was achieved prior to the imposition of a new pattern of development. The survival of elements from an earlier landscape can be significant in helping to define a sense of place — and it is feasible that landscapes that have developed over a period of time, where changes have not completely overwritten past morphologies, help us all to grasp this sense of place. For this reason, residual features are of importance to the whole community, not only to professionals interested in relating previous landscapes to current ones. For example, the relict timber framed building in a high street of later buildings; the street of houses contained within older field boundaries; the abandoned loop of a straightened road — all these can give interest and a sense of history that is lost when an older settlement pattern is swept away in its entirety before re-development. Identifying residual landscape features, therefore, particularly where near wholesale clearance has been achieved, is significant in terms of understanding and experiencing the contemporary landscape.

The phenomenological experience of landscape (including, of course, townscapes) is applicable to how a sense of place is resolved in this context. The irregularities and exceptions that the observer perceives moving through a defined space helps to establish identity and cultural depth. How tangible elements relate to each other, and the visual and spatial ease with which they do so, largely determine aesthetic satisfaction for the observer. Residual landscape features are an important element in this process.

For example, there are many historic buildings within the St Neots' area from (mainly) the later Middle Ages onwards, which are

accommodated within the urban built environment in a straight forward manner — they fit into an urbanised context because they are elements of habitation in an area within which habitation is dominant; even where the past to which they testify was quite different in nature to that of the present. However, there are other landscape features that have also survived into the urban matrix that are, perhaps, less obvious or less easy to interpret. These features are, however, important survivals that help to define a sense of place. They include a number of features such as: remnant field systems, greens and other residual open spaces, as well as public rights of way.

Public Ways and Common Spaces

The modern urban fabric is punctuated and connected by a skein of public ways and common spaces that have survived from earlier times. In St Neots, as in other urban settings, open spaces were frequently under pressure in the nineteenth century to be enclosed and built upon. Those that survived into the twentieth century as open spaces have been protected henceforth (Birtles 2003, 300-303). These common spaces are often highly valued by people living within the town as they give character and distinctiveness to localities, as well as allowing for recreation and pedestrian access away from busy roads. It is how these elements are disposed in St Neots, together with other features, that help to give the town its sense of place. Plate 9.3

Common spaces have survived within the built environment at Eynesbury, Eaton Socon, and Eaton Ford as relict village greens, and at St Neots itself in the form of a grand market square. These are important nodal points that indicate, together with the many surviving historic buildings within their vicinity, original settlement centres. Larger areas of common land, still often utilised for grazing tend to occur at major settlements along

the Ouse Valley, such as Huntingdon and Godmanchester; at St Neots the rather smaller Illand (or Island) Common has also survived. Green spaces associated particularly with local streams occur in places. Some are quite ancient, such as that at Green End, a hamlet along the Cambridge Road east of the main habitation of St Neots. This was once a space between the built environment of St Neots itself and the open countryside, but with the arrival of the railway largely lost this connection. Other streamside spaces have evolved as land between newer peripheral estates, for example the 'urban park' that lies either side of Hen Brook; this is a theme repeated at the new development at Love's Farm, which also has open areas along the Fox brook.

Where the Ouse meadows have survived they have done so as public spaces, or at least accessible through public footpaths. The township meadow at St Neots lies between Illand Common and the Ouse, just to the north of the habitation centre. Eynesbury meadow is situated to the south along the river to the west of the old open arable fields. Both of these meadows are accessible through footpaths. On the Eaton Socon side there was less meadowland, the common fields originally occupying much of the riparian land (with the exception of the rather diminutive Sudbury meadow, part of which is now looked after by a local environmental group). However the land on both sides of the river remain open grasslands either in the public domain or with access by public footpaths.

As the locality became built up, many existing footpaths survived as passageways between housing developments. This re-alignment of public ways began during the nineteenth century, but has continued through most major building phases. For example, within the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century development there were a number of field footpaths that

have now become a little known network of passageways, often marking the boundaries of old fields. Other more substantial trackways have survived through a similar mechanism; for example, Duck Lane, once an important bye way out of St Neots to the east, now survives in part as a twisting passageway through a housing estate. Duck Lane, in fact, may well prove to be a pre-historic route⁶ leading from the river to join Hales Lane, an important north/south trackway to the east of the town. Hales Lane is ancient and was of historical significance as an administrative boundary since the twelfth century, until the enlargement of Abbotsley parish in 2010. These public rights of way are not only of historic interest, but an important way that people experience the local landscape.

Remnant Field Systems

Little is known for certain about the detailed arrangements of the medieval field systems in the St Neots' area, although inferences might be drawn from later evidence. It is probable that the three open fields recorded at Eynesbury at the time of inclosure in 1800 reflected the arrangement that emerged towards the end of the twelfth century. However, what exactly the arrangements were for the hamlets of Weald, Caldecote and Lansbury is not clear. The evidence of the Anderson map suggests that Weald (CCC HER ref. 02364/a) had its own common fields in 1757, which were situated to the east of the Hales Way (or Lane), with old enclosures around the hamlet itself. The tithe map of 1837 shows a completely enclosed landscape, with areas of what was probably later enclosure to the north, east and south of the old enclosures — suggesting either a two or three field system. Just two men owned all the land at Weald in the nineteenth century, and the existence of a tithe apportionment without an accompanying inclosure

⁶ Mark Hinman, personal comment concerning recent archaeological work in the area, 2009.

order strongly suggests that enclosure was by private agreement at an earlier date⁷ (Weald, Map 9.5 1837, HRO: 2196/14).

There is evidence for a number of examples of medieval block demesne lands (enclosed manorial home farms) that were occupied in severalty. Caldecote was a single farm in the ownership of the Pym family by the time of the redemption of tithes in 1839 and according to the Anderson map it was already enclosed by 1757. Caldecote (Map 9.6 1839, HRO: 2196/14a&b) is a medieval moated site (CCC HER ref. 01119) and this farm may represent the demesne of an earlier manor, possibly also relating to the hamlet of Weald just to the north of it (Page et al 1974b, 276). The form of the field boundaries recorded on the tithe survey looks later than the typical piecemeal enclosures found elsewhere in the locality (for example, at Weald itself), and it is possible that they were re-ordered soon before the survey was made. Lansbury, another medieval hamlet with a moated site (CCC HER ref. 01115), was enclosed by 1770 and Puttocks Hardwick in Eynesbury parish (also with a medieval moat [CCC HER ref. 01116]) was enclosed before 1800. Monk's Hardwick in St Neots had been a demesne farm of St Neots' priory and is shown as fully enclosed with hedges on the Anderson map — the largest of the fields being 83 and 175 acres. Similarly, Priory Farm, also part of the Anderson estate and previously priory demesne, was fully enclosed by 1757 and included the Priory Field of about 170 acres. These large fields, subject to early piecemeal enclosure are interesting and accord with other early enclosures elsewhere in Huntingdonshire (such as at Keyston, Buckworth and Covington), where

⁷ The norm for Huntingdonshire was that earlier inclosure orders under a Parliamentary Act dealt contemporaneously with the redemption of tithes, whilst tithe apportionments under the Commutation of Tithes Act were applied to land previously enclosed by private agreement or land inclosed by Parliamentary Act after the Tithe Act came into force in 1838.

open fields once enclosed were not (initially at least) subdivided (Porter 1992, 88-90). However, the largest of the fields shown on the Anderson estate map had been sub-divided by the time of the 1st edition 6" OS map (1864), with Priory Field having been created into a park in 1796 (Page et al 1974b, 340). Today this is a public park owned by the St Neots' Town Council and the relict field boundaries of the earlier enclosures are still visible, as well as examples of earlier ridge and furrow. Thus, Priory Park is of particular interest as a landscape that still bears traces of each stage of its development over the last two hundred years from a landscape of open field agriculture to municipal parkland.

The complex tenorial structure of the open fields belonging to the manor of St Neots meant that they could only be enclosed by Parliamentary Act, something that happened in 1770. Prior to Inclosure, most furlongs were subdivided between numbers of tenants, but there were exceptions. The Anderson map records whole furlongs belonging to Sir Stephen Anderson in Stonehill and Paddock Hill common fields and, in one instant, three adjacent furlongs called Walk Piece totalling about 35 acres, which was re-allocated altogether at Inclosure. However, there were also examples of individual farms that were already enclosed by 1757. Of note is a collection of closes to the north of Hen Brook, east of St Neots' township, called the Bargroves (owned by the Earl of Sandwich) and the two farms of Upper and Lower Wintringham. The exact date of enclosure for the Bargroves and the Wintringham farms is uncertain. The enclosure of the latter might even be of a late medieval date as a large freehold was recorded as existing here in what was, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a well-established hamlet with its own chapel (Page et al 1974b, 340-341). Recent archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the Bargroves and

Wintringham, ahead of proposed development, have revealed significant elements of Roman settlement as well as evidence of Iron Age farming; the Bargroves themselves seem to coincide with ploughed out barrows⁸. The trackway that connects Duck Lane to Hales Lane (mentioned above) passes through the site and can be dated, thereby, to the Iron Age.

A recent major excavation at Love's Farm has yielded important information on how the field system here developed, as well as evidence of continuity from the Iron Age⁹. The preliminary findings of the Love's Farm excavations, especially concerning field boundaries and configurations, are only now beginning to emerge. Adam Love's farm was situated at the edge of the St Neots' manorial open fields where they abutted with the priory demesne lands, the latter owned in 1770 by Sir Stephen Anderson. Initially the farm occupied land enclosed from three of the St Neots' common fields (Stoneyside, Redland, and Rowleyside), but later acquired that part of the Anderson Estate that was isolated from the rest when the railway line was constructed. This brought into the excavated area land enclosed by 1757 as well as land enclosed after 1770. The northern limits of the site are marked by a lane running east/west to Monk's Hardwick, and by the Cambridge Road to the south. The Fox Brook flows diagonally across the southeast corner of the site, just west of its confluence with the Dean Brook (now no longer visible on the surface). The site rises gently from the Cambridge Road to the Hardwick Lane with an open aspect.

⁸ Personal briefing by Mark Hinman of Oxfordshire Archaeology, based on unpublished excavation reports, 2010.

⁹ The results of the Love's Farm excavation are still being written up and will appear in a forthcoming publication (due 2011) by Hinman, Chester-Kadwell et al.

The boundaries of the common fields in the area of Love's farm seem to have followed the course of the Fox and Dean brooks¹⁰. Using the evidence of the Anderson Estate map of 1757, together with that of the furlong boundaries contained in the draft inclosure map of 1770 for St Neots' manor, it is possible to reconstruct the pre-inclosure boundaries. Plan 9.3 When matched against the ridge and furrow recorded through excavation the picture becomes even clearer: the archaeological evidence suggests that this ridge and furrow is predominantly medieval, which would mean that the field layout originated in the Middle Ages (Hinman, Chester-Kadwell et al 2011 forthcoming). Plan 9.4 The relationship of the furlongs marked on the inclosure map to the post enclosure boundaries recorded on the OS 1st edition 6" map of 1864 is shown on Plan 9.5. This shows that whilst the boundaries between the principal allotments do not respect the original field or furlong boundaries, a number of the field boundaries subdividing these allotments are pre-Parliamentary Inclosure survivals. This suggests that in the Love's farm area itself, there was a high degree of continuity between pre and post inclosure boundaries.

The whole of Love's Farm was stripped of its topsoil and the site excavated between 2004 and 2008. Plate 9.4. This demonstrated that this area had been intensely occupied from at least the Iron Age; a pattern of occupation that persisted somewhere on the site until the early Saxon period, but not again then until the post inclosure farmstead was built. However, the land itself has always been cultivated and evidence to support this was found for all periods. The excavation proved that some, at least, of the early field boundaries were maintained throughout the medieval period

¹⁰ The evidence for the exact boundaries for many of the open fields in St Neots can be conflicting and difficult to follow. The draft inclosure map (1770) suggests a hierarchy of types that is sometimes at odds with evidence from the two surveys of 1757.

and one in particular is very significant — an ancient hedge-line extending from the site of Love's Farm buildings ran west in the direction of the river. This was part of a long straight hedge marked on the Anderson map of 1757 as 'the Rowley Hedge', the boundary between one of the township common fields and the Priory demesne. The line of this hedge can still be traced through the modern town of St Neots, although it is now incomplete. The excavated section of this hedge line at Love's Farm was also a significant boundary in the Iron Age and through the Roman period and seems to have been continuously maintained until the developers removed it (Hinman 2008, 12-13).

The evidence for an Iron Age origin for the Rowley Hedge and its maintenance through the Roman period raises interesting issues about continuity of pre-medieval field boundaries into the Middle Ages. The existence of large-scale prehistoric field systems is known from the Bronze Age 'reaves' on Dartmoor (Fleming 1988), and smaller systems of known prehistoric or Roman origin are found in many other areas, often as upstanding features on 'marginal' lands (Percival and Williamson 2005, 2). Scholars have become increasingly interested in the possibility of similar systems being present within landscapes overlaid by more recent features since the 1970s, when Drury produced his findings at Little Waltham in Essex (Drury 1978). Subsequently, a number of claims have been made that extensive prehistoric field systems have survived in part until modern times, particularly within 'ancient' countryside (see Bassett 1982; Williamson 1998). These systems are predominantly 'co-axial', which means that they have a long axis orientated towards particular topographical feature (typically set at right angles to major rivers), with the spaces between divided into fields by shorter boundaries created at right angles to the major

axis. See Plate 9.5. Similar patterns have been discerned within areas of ‘planned’ countryside, which may have pre-medieval origins (Hesse 1992 & 1998; Harrison 2002). In southwest Cambridgeshire, an area contiguous with the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley, Oosthuizen has claimed to have found topographical evidence that there was ‘considerable reuse of earlier land divisions in common field layouts’ (Oosthuizen 2006, 89-90). It should be noted, however, that at St Neots in the area of Love’s Farm that there is no striking evidence of extensive co-axial fields.

Archaeological evidence to support ideas of field boundary continuity is less common, and tends to be limited to comparatively few excavated sites that are also usually restricted in extent. Investigations in south Cambridgeshire in the late 1970s suggest that some medieval furlongs may have developed from pre-medieval fields (Fowler and Taylor 1978). At Haddon in north Huntingdonshire, Upex has discovered Roman field boundaries beneath medieval open field headlands (Upex 2002, 82-87); and at Burnham Sutton in Norfolk a close relationship between early fields and medieval furlongs was discovered at an excavation there too (Percival and Williamson 2005, 14-16)¹¹. It is not surprising therefore, that some of the late Iron Age and Roman boundaries at Love’s Farm also bore a close relationship with medieval furlong boundaries. Plans 9.6a, b & c. The furlongs of the pre-inclosed open fields conformed to the local topography dominated by local brooks that flow westerly into the Ouse, with the streams in the Love’s Farm area forming a dendritic pattern of converging tributaries. The topography is so specific that it might be possible to theorise

¹¹ Some recent research in Northamptonshire has discovered evidence that in some places later medieval fields seem to have been set out using Roman field alignments, following a period of abandonment (Williamson, Liddiard, and Partida, 2010 (forthcoming) *The Making of Champion Landscapes: mapping medieval Northamptonshire*).

that landholders in different ages may be inclined to layout similar field boundaries in response to it. In which case what we might be seeing here is not necessarily continuous maintenance of specific boundaries, but a broad continuity within a generalised pattern of boundaries.

The excavation at Love's Farm has added significantly to a general understanding about the processes involved in boundary survival and continuity. It has also shown the potential for this type of investigation to inform the shape of future development. Sadly, the urban design framework for the Love's Farm did not take advantage of the landscape assessment that arose from the archaeological investigation: other than retaining a green corridor along the course of the Fox brook, none of the key features (such as the Rowley Hedge or retained field boundaries) were built into the final design. However, they might have done (and arguably, should have done). This is a missed planning opportunity that it is to be hoped will not be repeated at the second development site at Wintringham Park. On both these sites relict landscape features have been confirmed which would, if preserved, maintain local character and help to relate these specific sites with the broader landscape context of the town of St Neots. Thus, new knowledge of earlier morphogenic periods can be used to reinforce the sense of place of contemporary settlement if they are brought to the attention of planners and developers in time.

Field boundaries can survive for long periods after the fields themselves have been developed, especially when individual fields form the basis of development plots. This happened more often in the past; for example, close to the town centre at St Neots, following the general inclosure of 1770, a number of new and quite small allotments were created that proved attractive for building schemes in the late nineteenth and early

twentieth centuries (a process replicated at other places in Huntingdonshire, notably at Ramsey following general enclosure and at St Ives, following earlier piecemeal enclosure). The boundaries of these plots in older developed areas of St Neots are still extant within the built environment, but the grain of such developments vary depending on the size of the plots — very small plots often produce a townscape of individualised detached or semi-detached houses along an existing street front, whilst the larger plots can accommodate whole new street layouts. In contrast, in areas of extensive late twentieth-century developments, where multiple fields have been acquired and the existing pattern of field boundaries swept aside prior to more comprehensive development, evidence of earlier morphogenic periods is lost. Consequently, piecemeal and comprehensive forms of development often sit uncomfortably together — particularly when, as at St Neots, they occur in close association.

Plate 9. 3 St Neots' District: Public Ways and Open Spaces



Urban footpath: successor to field track



Green End: along the Cambridge Road



Riverside Park: footbridge between Eynesbury and Eaton Ford



Illand Common, St Neots



Eynesbury Green

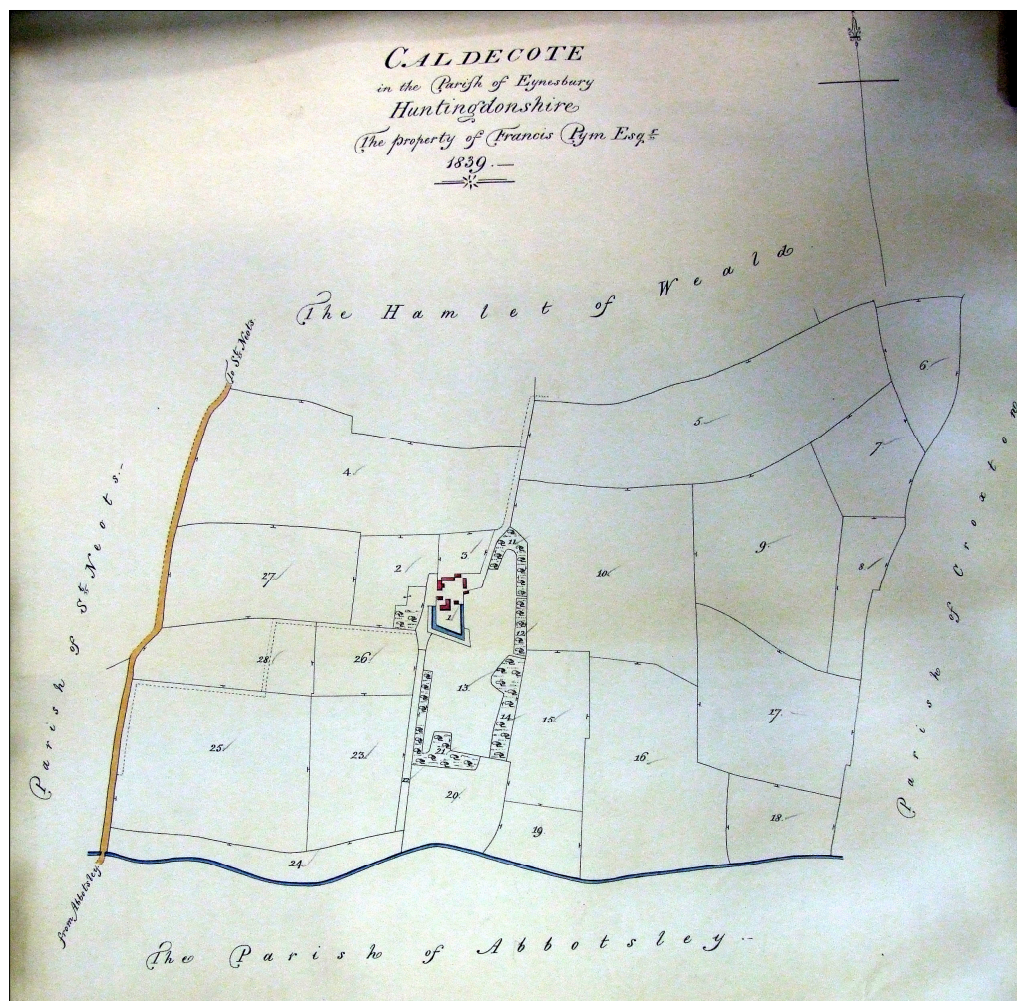


Fox Brook: public open space

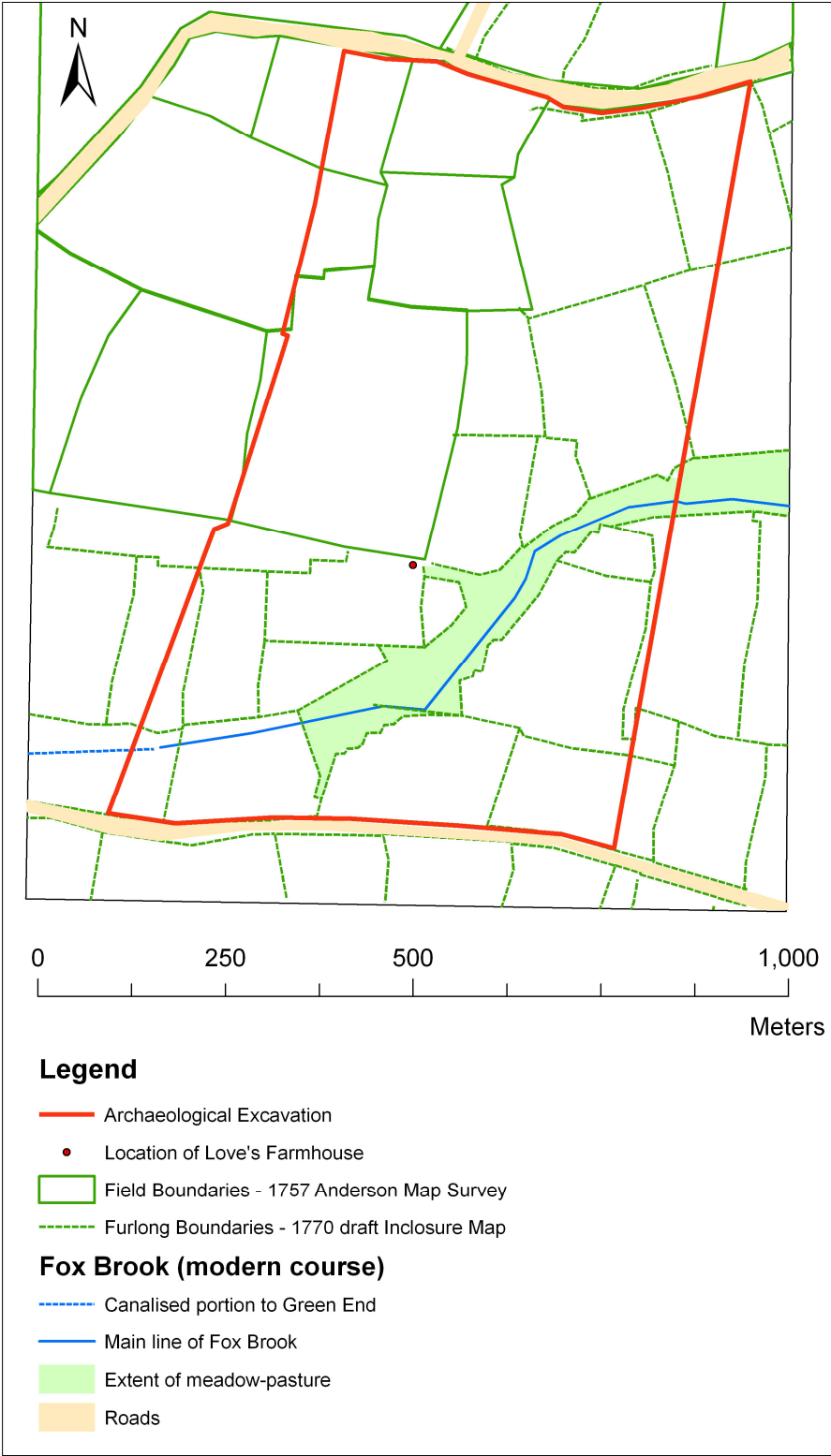
Map 9.5 Weald



Map 9.6 Caldecote

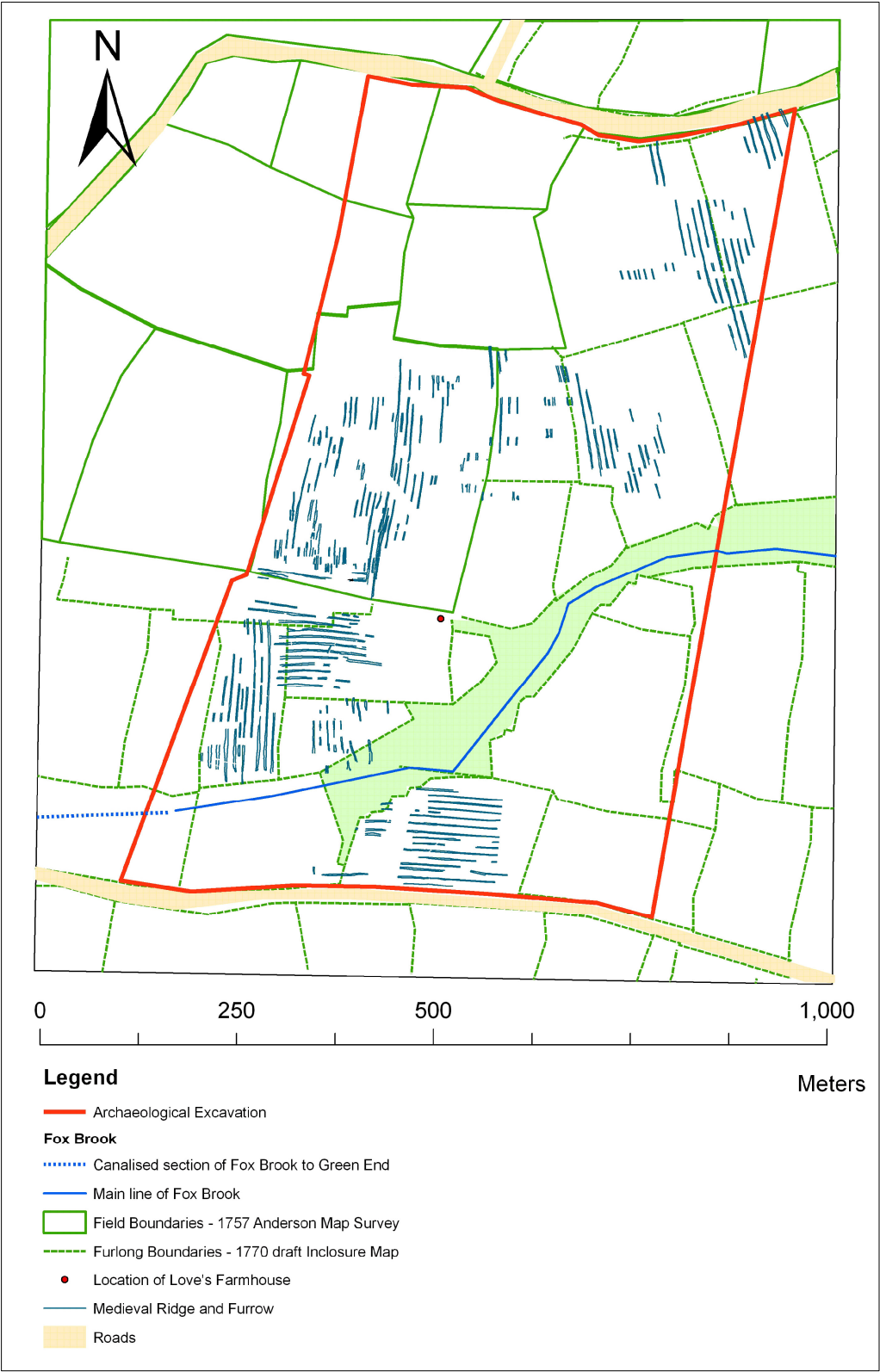


Plan 9.3 Love's Farm: pre-enclosure boundaries



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Plan 9.4 Love's Farm: Relationship of Ridge and Furrow to Pre-enclosure boundaries



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Plan 9.5 Love's Farm: Relationship of Ridge and Furrow to Post-enclosure boundaries



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Plate 9. 4 Love's Farm: Yesterday and Today



Love's Farm prior to development



Excavation site, Area 4B, north of Rowley's Hedge, evidence of fourth century occupation



Relationship of Love's Farm site to the rest of the urban environment (from the north)



Love's Farm new development, looking west towards the railway

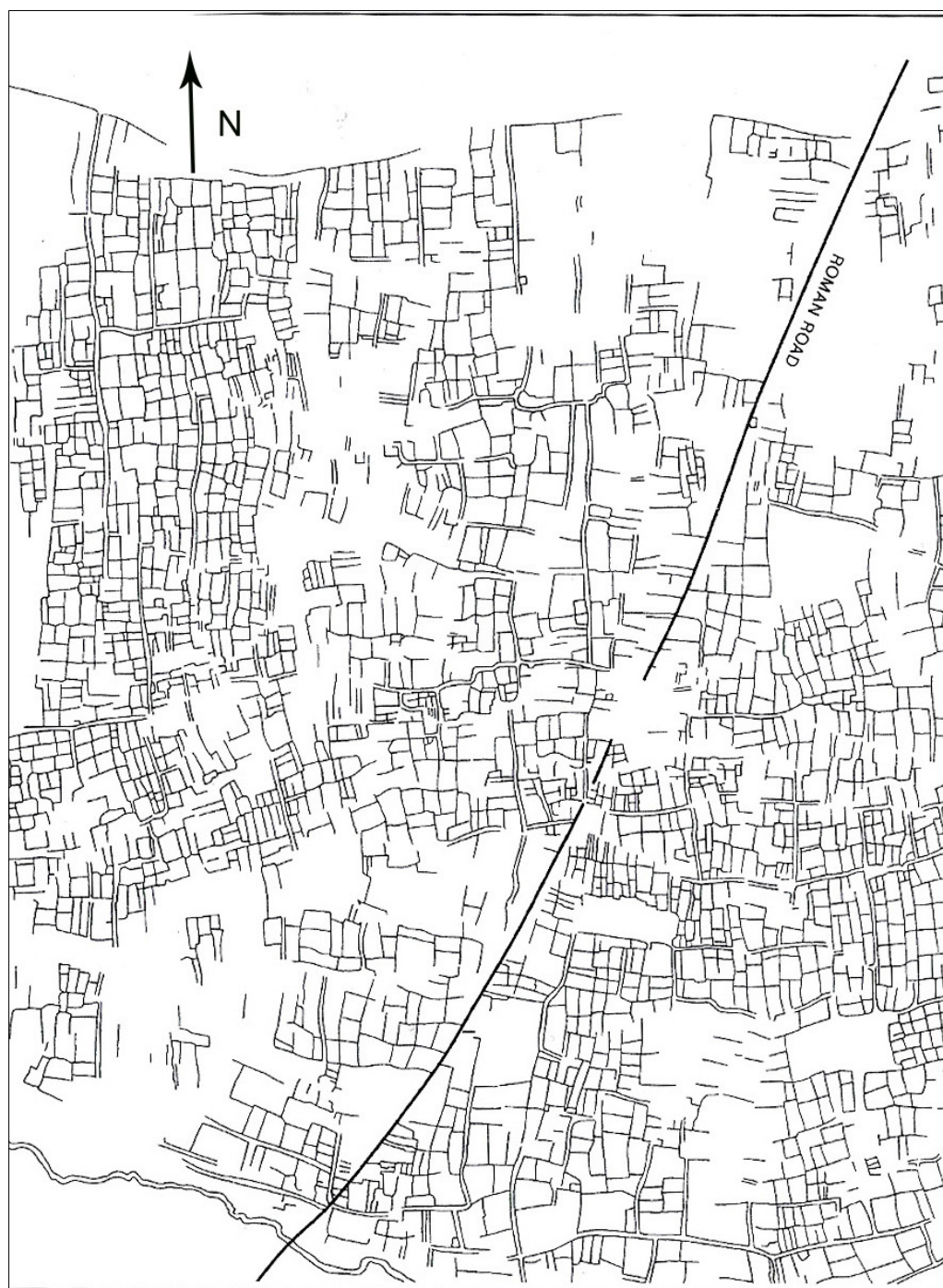


Fox Brook, looking east

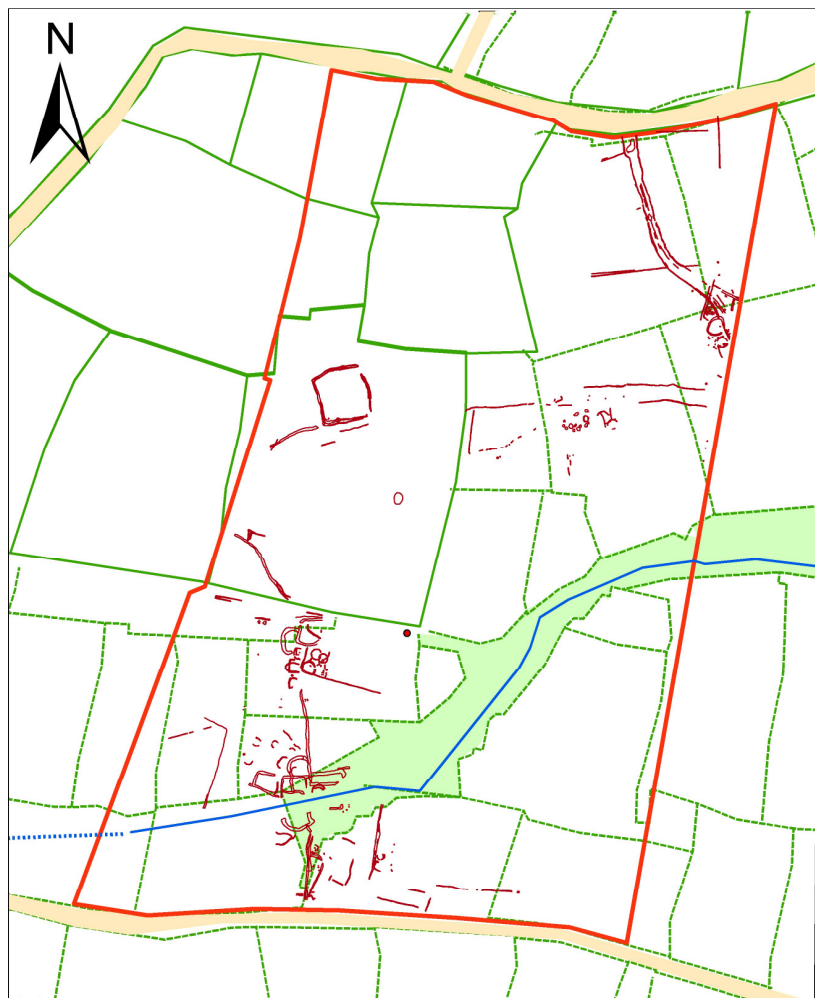


Love's Farm residential development

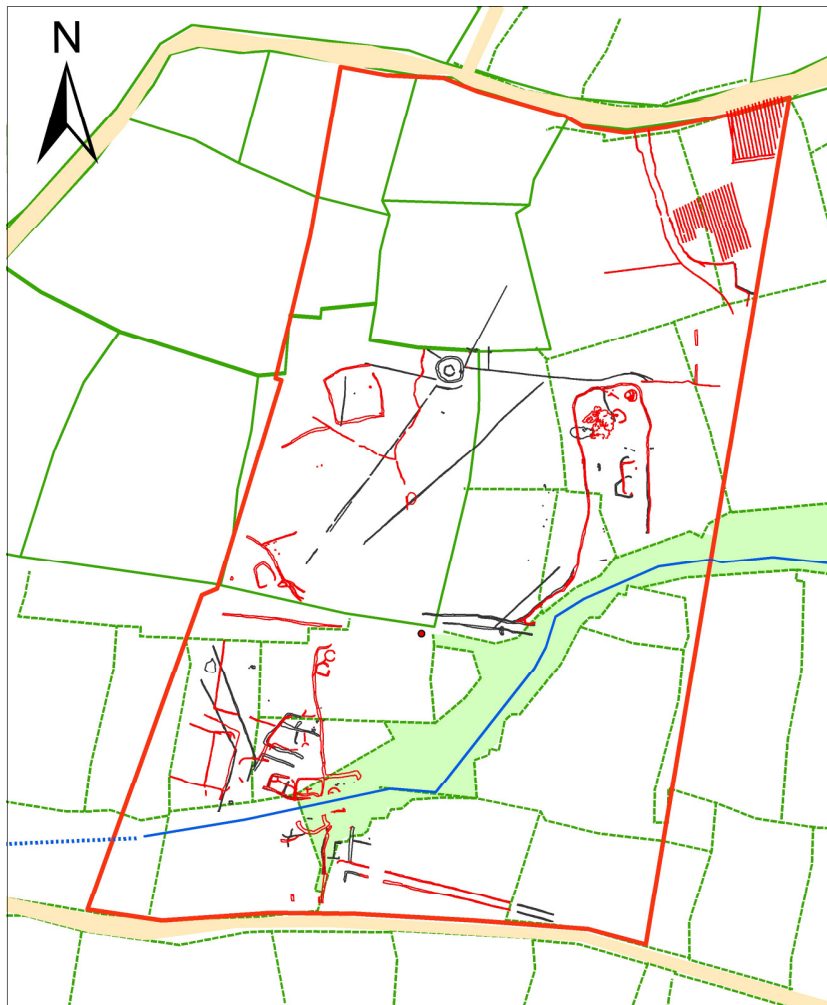
Plate 9.5 Co-axial Field Patterns: South Norfolk– after Williamson



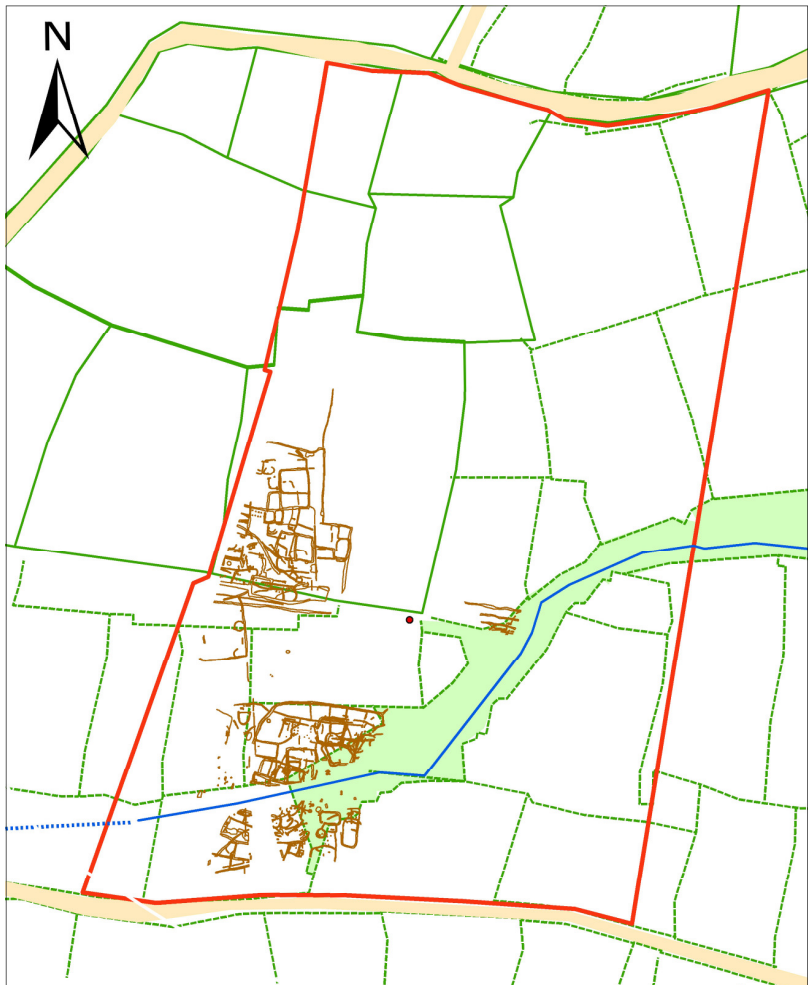
Plan 9.6a, b and c: relationship of Pre-Enclosure Boundaries to Archaeological Evidence for different Periods



(a) Middle to Late Iron Age



(b) Late Pre-Roman to second century AD



(c) Second to Fourth century AD

Legend

Archaeological Excavation

Canalised section of Fox Brook to Green End

Main line of Fox Brook

Field Boundaries - 1757 Anderson Map Survey

Furlong Boundaries - 1770 draft Inclosure Map

Location of Love's Farmhouse

Roads

COMMENTARY

Local Identity in an Urban Space

What emerges from the discussion of the survival of residual elements from earlier morphogenic periods is their importance to a perception of contemporary settlement and what they can contribute to urban design in the future. In terms of settlement identity St Neots raises some important issues arising from the intention of the planners to create a new identity for the area by re-focussing the expanded settlement of the new town on St Neots' Market Square, promoting it as a pivotal spatial core. How well the town actually operates as a unified settlement within the perception of residents, however, needs further exploration, as many seem to identify with the smaller historic centres, Eynesbury and the Eatons¹². This is, of course, a sociological question, the answer to which is not strictly within the scope of the thesis. However, the possibilities raised do have relevance in the context of how the sense of place is understood as well as the manner in which perceptions of place are recorded and analysed.

There are a number of features that help to create what planners and spatial analysts call the 'memorable areas' of a settlement (Landscape Design Associates 2003). These tend to be the elements with a more obvious visual quality that may be easily perceived and through which the place is identified. Individuals and groups may also place value on aspects (not necessarily so visually appealing) that have meaning for them through their daily lives (maybe their old school, workplace or other local feature with meaning in the context of living in a place). What has just been explored

¹² For example, although there is a local history society that covers the whole of the modern town (<http://stneotslhs.org.uk/#>), there are also other local organisations that strongly identify with the individual historic settlements (www.escan.org.uk/).

under the notion of residual landscape features, such as remnant fields (or at least their boundaries), surviving footpaths, and especially common spaces, are particularly powerful in establishing local identity in the physical environment. These are landmark spaces, but buildings can also be distinctive landmarks, and the two in combination are very powerful: for St Neots the image of the parish church beyond the market square is one such combination.

The nature of much of the more recent building in the ‘new’ town of St Neots is connected to the requirements of additional housing estates, but it is the medieval settlement centres that help to create a sense of place for the local neighbourhoods. This was certainly the experience of those residents who responded to the public consultation exercises carried out by Huntingdonshire District Council, in connection with the St Neots’ Conservation Area Character Assessment in 2006 (Huntingdonshire District Council official papers). However, it is also the spatial relationship between these built elements and the open spaces of the river corridor that give the town its memorable character over all (Landscape Design Associates 2003, 57-70).

Rural Identity in an Urban Space

The modern town of St Neots presents some interesting challenges as the successor settlement to a number of well-established and at one time autonomous rural settlements. Whilst the town in its conceptual form is new, St Neots was not designated as a ‘new town’ and the local planning authority, rather than one of the New Town Commissions, supervised the initial planning decisions. Leaving the planning of the new St Neots to local planners may account for the apparent lack of clarity and coherence in the town’s urban design; a designated New Town Commission may have

formulated a more coherent concept and vision for St Neots. The subsequent form of development has only poorly respected the underlying historic pattern of settlement development (even though this has not been completely over-written). Many historical landscape features have been or are threatened by the method of implementing contemporary development in the town, a practice that has continued at Love's Farm.

The analysis of the historic settlement pattern explored in this chapter, as well as the assessment of the impact of more recent developments on the historic fabric, has demonstrated how complex and heterogeneous St Neots' morphology has become. This has often created visual and experiential tensions within the built environment; for example, where the original village centres have had the open spatial elements tangential to them built upon — fields converted to a sea of houses. It is very noticeable that where older settlements abut the green river corridor, the morphological tensions are lessened.

Despite some quite extensive areas of unsympathetic development the residual core elements of the constituent historical settlements are still much in evidence. Recording what has survived from the past and placing these residual elements into their historic context will assist the understanding of St Neots' unique sense of place and may help future planning decisions to be more sensitive, creative and successful. How the various neighbourhoods are experienced can best be understood from ground level — it is not possible to gain more than a hint of this from the plan view. Techniques developed for recording the results of character assessment for townscapes and their associated landscape (often grounded in Conzen's own method of plan form analysis) may be used alongside the

kind of historic landscape analysis attempted in this study. This idea is further explored in the final chapter.

It is disappointing that the Love's Farm development seems to have been designed in isolation from a wider design concept for the whole settlement. For example, the preservation of a green corridor along the Fox Brook is welcomed, but it fails to create a visual link with the open space at Green End (a few hundred yards further along Fox Brook, nearer to the town centre), partly because the houses have been built right up to the road. Within the site, the removal of most of the surface features that gave the area its historic character, and in the case of the Rowley Hedge a connection both with its prehistoric past and a physical link into the morphology of the area of settlement by the Ouse, is to be regretted.

It could be argued that a thorough historic landscape assessment prior to planning permission being granted might have led to a more sensitive estate plan, which allowed some of these features to inform the urban design; something that clearly the archaeological excavation could record but not effect because of the way that the planning process sometimes works. This lesson goes beyond the impact of individual development schemes and the chapter has looked at the implications for the whole settlement of some of the broader issues raised by the analysis of the historic landscape. Without a strong notion of what gives St Neots its identity, it is hard to preserve and promote the sense of place.

St Neots seems to have expanded in a piecemeal way. This has militated against a robust understanding of the overall character of the settlement, which has resulted in a lack of morphological coherence. This is experienced in a number of ways, in the tension between new development styles and that found in adjacent older settlement centres; the nature of the

interface between the built environment and the open countryside; and the poor sense of scale between elements of the built environment. The character of the town lies in the memorable neighbourhoods, basically the rural roots of St Neots. Understanding these morphologies, especially as the town expands further, is the key to future success. How the narratives can be utilised for future planning will be picked up again in Chapter 13.

Part Three, Section 2:

**SIX PARISHES in the HIGH WEALD of KENT and EAST
SUSSEX**

CHAPTER 10: SIX WEALDEN PARISHES — ORIGINS OF THE CONTEMPORARY SETTLEMENT PATTERN

“..For the earth seems now to remember the drive of the ploughshare and its harrying; the seed, and the full bursting of it, the swelling and the completion of the harvest. Up to the edge of the woods throughout the weald the earth has borne fruit; the barns are full, and the wheat is standing stacked in the fields, and there are orchards all around....”¹

¹ *Hills and the Sea*, Hillaire Belloc, 1906, p 120.

INTRODUCTION

S W Wooldridge in *The Weald*, his seminal study on the region's geography and natural history, acknowledged the importance of the origins of settlement for understanding contemporary settlement (Wooldridge & Goldring 1966, 190-212). Knowledge of the early settlement history of the Weald, it has been argued, is essential to an understanding of the Wealden landscape itself. Influential writers such as Witney (discussing Kent) and Brandon (discussing Sussex) have made the point that the pattern of settlement and its agricultural practices were largely determined by the manner of its colonisation (Witney 1976, 55; Brandon 2003, 9). This belief is reflected in the approach adopted by the High Weald Unit (HWU website www.highweald.org/text.asp?PageId=6), the organisation tasked with promoting the High Weald and advising local planning authorities. Consequently, a study of early settlement formation supports the management of the landscape as it is currently practiced and is systemic to the contemporary planning regime.

A key issue for planners, therefore, is to be as certain as possible about how early the foundations of the settlement character — that is so distinctive of the area today — were laid down. By the sixteenth century (and more so by the seventeenth) the nature of settlement of the eastern High Weald is well documented and is recognisably modern; a familiar backdrop to the social, political and economic activity of the times. What is of interest is the antiquity of the settlement pattern that emerges at that time, and to address that issue it is necessary to look back into the pre-Conquest period. However, the examination of early settlement is tentative and practices (such as the role of transhumance in this early period) are

frequently speculative, because written records and archaeological evidence for this period is slight.

The early settlement history of the Weald is obscure and an understanding of it has developed slowly over the years amongst historians, archaeologists, and geographers. Older theories suggesting that there was a distinct break between periods of Roman and pre-Roman activity and the eventual (and perhaps gradual) colonisation by Saxon peoples have slowly given way to newer ideas accepting a greater or lesser degree of continuity — with the period of colonisation happening over a much shorter time-scale (Loyn 1962, 36; Everitt 1986, 1-3; Thomas 2007)².

Taking the arguments for and against early permanent settlement, and for a greater or lesser degree of continuity between the settlements present at the end of Roman rule and those of the Saxons, probability now seems to favour earlier permanence and at least some degree of continuity. This still remains largely guesswork for this period, although Taylor argues for an early date for permanent Saxon settlement and leaves open the possibility for continuity with Roman land use (Taylor 1983, 182). The likelihood is that by the time of the Conquest the broad settlement pattern was established, even if this was rudimentary. As the evidence becomes more abundant from the eleventh century onwards, settlement generally from this time becomes more explicable in terms of its relationship to that which subsists in later landscapes.

² A critique of the early settlement of the High Weald is given in Appendix E.

NARRATIVE

Settlement in the High Weald in the Eleventh Century

Knowledge of Wealden settlement in the eleventh century relies on a series of early written sources (or later copies of earlier sources) of which the best known is Domesday Book. Sussex Domesday for the Rape of Hastings gives a reasonably full account for land tenure and the extent of settlement in the High Weald within the Rape. For the Kent High Weald, however, the Domesday account is fraught with difficulty because there are very few entries indeed that can be related to High Weald hundreds in that county. However, other texts such as the Domesday Monachorum and the Textus Roffensis, supplement our knowledge with the result that the eleventh-century landscape appears to contain most of the places with which we are familiar today.

The Sussex Parishes

King William I saw the County of Sussex as an area of significant strategic importance. He had proved, by his own success, exactly how important (and vulnerable) the Sussex littoral was and devised an administration for the county that allowed for a coherent military response against any future threat to its security (Round & Salzman 1973, 353). The result of this policy was the establishment of a series of lordships that divided the county into five divisions called 'rapes', each of which had a principal town and castle, granted to a trusted lord whose Honour was the dominant land holding there (Adams 1999, 40-41)³. The origin of the rapes is unknown, but they may represent administrative organisation of the once independent Kingdom of the South Saxons (Haselgrove 1978, 198-199).

³ The rapes were re-organised not long after the creation of Domesday Book with the creation of an additional rape (Adams 1999, 40-41).

Each rape was divided into hundreds, which were pre-Conquest administrative districts of uncertain date. Sussex hundreds varied widely in size, but most were quite small and fell well short of the theoretical one hundred hides normally associated with the hundredal system elsewhere (Gardiner 1999, 30).

Just how small the Sussex hundreds could be can be seen through a comparison with those in the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley⁴. Of the three Huntingdonshire hundreds examined two contained twenty-three parishes and the third twenty-seven; hundred boundaries normally coincided with parish boundaries, and the smallest of these three hundreds was in excess of 50,000 acres. Of the three Sussex hundreds included in this study the largest was just over 14,000 acres. Henhurst Hundred (10,665 acres⁵) contained at the time of Domesday the whole of Salehurst parish (which included the later Liberty of Robertsbridge Abbey); just over half of what would later become Etchingham parish, part of Brightling parish, and small parts of Burwash and Mountfield⁶. Shoyswell (10,769 acres) seems to have centred on the manor of Hazelhurst in what is now Ticehurst parish, together with parts of Etchingham (in which Shoyswell itself sits) and Burwash. Staple Hundred (14,145 acres) contained Ewhurst and Bodiam (recorded together by Domesday) and substantial parts of three other parishes; Ewhurst and Bodiam together now account for 7,450 acres. Notably, the High Weald hundreds in this part of Sussex were small, contained territory that would

⁴ For the sake of convenience the areas of the hundreds are based on those determined by the Ordnance Survey in the nineteenth century with adjustments for later inclusions where these can be identified; although Domesday hundreds would have been slightly differently constituted the areas would still have been roughly comparable.

⁵ This included an area that was, until the twentieth century, a part of the Kentish parish of Hawkhurst, having until 1894 an outlier of that county (Page 1974, 363 n. 26).

⁶ The latter may have been a post Domesday addition partly caused by the inclusion of Glottenham into the Barony of Etchingham.

later be included into a number of parishes, but with a clear core territory typically centred around a local manor which (in the case of these three particular hundreds) had a church by 1086 (Morris 1976, 9,82; 9,60; 9,120). The organisation and size of the Kentish hundreds in the High Weald was similar, although the relationship between parish and hundred was, if anything, more complex (see below).

Sussex Domesday records those who held land within each hundred within the rapes, recording the value of the assets of each estate and the hidage, or the amount of land upon which taxation was to be assessed. The unit of assessment was the manor, which was entered within the hundred and rape where the lord's caput was situated. The result is that (as is also commonly the case elsewhere in the country) Domesday does not give an accurate picture of the distribution of settlement throughout the county, as many places were assessed as part of a manor that could lay many miles from where an outlying settlement was actually situated. In Sussex this is a particular problem where Downland and Coastal manors had outliers (often many miles from the manorial seat of administration), which (as in Kent) led to the under-recording of settlement within the High Weald generally. However, in the Rape of Hastings this problem has been partially mitigated because in 1086 land previously held as outliers by a number of manors in the Rape of Pevensey (but geographically situated in the Rape of Hastings) were in the process of being handed over to Count Robert of Eu, Lord of the Barony of Hastings (Round & Salzman 1973, 357-358; Morris 1976, see note on 'The Outliers'). Consequently, in the three Wealden hundreds of Shoyswell, Henhurst and Hawksborough not only are the local manors recorded but also a number of holdings that would otherwise have remained hidden in the entries for manors in Pevensey. Fortunately, two of the three

parishes in this study, Salehurst and Etchingham, fall within two of these hundreds, whilst the third, Bodiam, is recorded in its own right as a sub-manor of Ewhurst in the Hundred of Staple. Consequently it is possible to gain a good idea of the minimum level of settlement in the area to an extent that it not possible elsewhere in the High Weald, especially in Kent.

An examination of the returns for the hundreds of Shoyswell and Henhurst reveals that settlement was well established in this part of the Sussex High Weald. Tables 10.1a and b set out the holdings mentioned in Domesday in these Hundreds, as well as the entries for Ewhurst and Bodiam in the Hundred of Staple (the manor of Eyelids is included as this also falls into the later parish of Ewhurst). It will be noticed that the local manors are assessed with having a small hidage both in real terms and in relation to the number of ploughs recorded — difficult concepts to interpret and integrate into a comprehensive scheme as Roffe has recently demonstrated (Roffe 2007, 190-197; 203-209 & 217-219). The holdings, including the outliers from the Pevensey manors are small and most have a typical area of one or two virgates. It is difficult to know how accurately these land measures are reflecting the actual size of the holdings in acres, or whether the numbers apply in a purely fiscal sense. Round, Salzman and Morris have pointed out that they can be used in both ways in Domesday, but the evidence seems to suggest that the smaller holdings were more likely to be assessed on their actual size (Round & Salzman 1973, 358-359; Morris 1976) and were less likely to benefit from the fiscal reductions often applied to the holdings of the great landowners; for example, the ‘beneficial’ reductions that seem to have been applied to the Archbishop of Canterbury’s estates both in Kent and Sussex (Round and Salzman 1973, 360). Gardiner has shown that a typical peasant tenement of 20-40 acres was a not uncommon measure of

land in the eleventh or twelfth centuries (Gardiner 1996, 98) and it is quite possible that this reflects a Domesday virgate of about 30-40 acres. By way of an example, if the Burgham recorded in Domesday hundred of Henhurst, which had two virgates worked by two households, is actually the same as the Burgham later identified in Etchingham parish assessed in a quitclaim of 1421 at 65 acres (Martin 1988, P15/21), this would seem to support the view that the typical holding was a virgate or multiples or divisions of the same. Furthermore, the succession of smaller holdings would fit the profile of a highly dispersed settlement pattern that still exists in the High Weald and can also be found contemporaneously elsewhere — such as in the southwest of England (Hoskins & Finburgh 1952) and as described by Taylor generally for the southeast of England (Taylor 1983, 181-1822)⁷.

It is now generally accepted that the East Sussex High Weald was well settled by the time of Domesday — if sparsely (Gardiner 1995, 94; but see Brandon 2003, 52), and Domesday evidence clearly indicates that by the eleventh century there was a well-established settlement pattern. However, in order to gauge the relative density of settlement it would be helpful if it were possible to compare Wealden settlement densities with other areas. Whilst it will probably never be feasible to gain a particularly accurate estimation, an approximation may be sought by measuring the asset base of Domesday manors or townships against their approximate acreage, based upon the later medieval parishes within which they were situated. Of course, compared to some of the coastal and downland manors of Sussex, the High Weald seems sparsely populated (even on a cursory inspection) but the differences may be magnified for two reasons. First, many of the coastal and

⁷ However, caution is needed because of the complexity in how land valuation was measured in Sussex Domesday. It is suggested that coastal hides were rated at four virgates, with those inland at eight (Round & Salzmann 1973, 359-360; Searle, 1963, 294-297).

downland manors are particularly large and wealthy (they are not necessarily typical of other manors elsewhere) and secondly, the entries for these manors are potentially inflated by the inclusion of further unidentified outliers situated in the Weald itself. However, it should be possible to get a better idea of the degree of Wealden settlement density by comparing the Wealden Hundreds with areas from other parts of the country. Therefore, an attempt is made here to compare the Sussex High Weald with settlements in the Huntingdon Ouse Valley. The calculations are based on the number of ploughs (as an indication of the degree of cultivation) and households (as an indication of population levels) recorded in the returns in relation to the known areas of the successor medieval parishes/hundreds, to arrive at a broad estimate on relative settlement density expressed as a ratio of the number of acres to one plough, or one household. Table 10.2 shows the number of ploughs and households for the Wealden hundreds of Hawksborough, Shoyswell and Henhurst (the three hundreds recording the Pevensey outliers) and compares them with seven Domesday townships in the Huntingdonshire/Bedfordshire Ouse Valley of comparable area.

Surprisingly, the Wealden settlements have a higher percentage of ploughs per household than those in the Ouse Valley, but 15% fewer ploughs overall for the total acreage. What is also clear is that there is a real difference in the density of population where households in the Weald were only about 62% of those in the Ouse Valley by area. It has been suggested (Brandon 2003, 75-78) that large tracts of the Sussex Weald were reserved for activities other than agriculture (i.e. hunting and other forestry activity) and that may, to some degree, account for the higher ratio of acres to

households⁸. On the other hand, it is also likely that the number of households (and maybe also ploughs) is under represented if (as is quite likely) some Wealden settlement is included in the totals for coastal manors within the Rape of Hastings itself, resulting in outliers not being separately identified. It is also possible that the number of ploughs recorded for the High Weald settlements is slightly greater than might be expected because, being an area of dispersed settlement, more ploughs were needed than in comparable areas of nucleated settlement — however, as has been shown, the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley itself was an area with some dispersed settlement, although to a lesser degree.

What is also clear from Table 10.2 is that there are differences between the Wealden Hundreds themselves. Further insights into the relative values of interpretative data can be obtained by comparing the individual hundreds with a wider range of different types of settlements within the Ouse Valley. Three broad topographies can be identified amongst the Ouse Valley settlements, for example; (a) ‘wood pasture’: settlements like Eynesbury, Eaton Socon, Buckden, Brampton, Paxton, Slepe and Hartford — townships that included areas of dispersed settlement and woodlands in the eleventh century and which, in many respects, have a topographic profile close to that found in the Weald; (b) ‘fenland’: settlements like Fenstanton, Bluntisham and Holywell that included large areas of fen, heath-land and woodland; (c) ‘riverside’: settlements like Offord, Godmanchester, Hemingford, Houghton and Wyton that had extensive areas of lighter soils on the gravel terraces of the Great Ouse. Of course, all

⁸ This, along with the usual argument about the under recording for the Weald due to the external holding of resources, may also account for the apparently low woodland figures for the Sussex Wealden hundreds. Bearing in mind also that the Weald was a swine-rent area and each ‘pig’ needs to be multiplied by a factor of ten (Rackham 2003, 124).

Ouse Valley townships had river side characteristics to a greater or lesser degree, which partly accounts for their more favourable ratios over all. However, in group “c” settlements these attributes are more pronounced. Table 10.3 illustrates how these types compare in terms of their density ratios against the ratios for individual hundreds in the Weald, with one of the Sussex coastal hundreds included as an indication of the range within the Rape of Hastings itself.

Despite the considerable opportunity for inaccuracy in the calculation for these ratios, there does seem to be a discernable pattern emerging in terms of the settlement density of the different categories of settlement morphology in both the Sussex and Ouse Valley groups. The Wealden hundreds show a lower density of households compared to the Ouse Valley settlements (excepting that for the fen edge settlements), a variation that may be partly explained if some households in the Weald were included in the coastal manors. Comparison between the Wealden hundreds and the coastal hundred of Bexhill shows a result not out of keeping with their comparison with the more favoured townships in the Ouse valley. What is of particular interest is that, based on these figures, it could be argued that the differences between the Wealden areas and the coastal areas may not be as great as sometimes postulated, and that generally the results from these very different parts of the country are broadly comparable, falling within a definable range — particularly in terms of actual ‘ploughs’ recorded. Bearing in mind the possibility of under recording of settlement assets within the Wealden hundreds it can be argued on this evidence that settlement in the High Weald in the Rape of Hastings, at least, may not have been dramatically less than elsewhere. This reinforces the picture presented by the work of Gardiner (1995, pp.89-94) relating in particular to the Lowy

of Battle just to the south of Henhurst Hundred, which suggests that settlement in the Weald of eastern Sussex was well advanced by the eleventh century.

It could be argued that the Weald (and the High Weald in particular) has tended to be regarded as a special case in terms of the development of its settlement pattern. This has partly been because of its perceived late and 'unusual' form of colonisation, and partly because of the specific tenurial arrangements (strongest on the Kent side) that shared the control of Wealden lands between those estates in Sussex, Surrey and Kent that were situated outside the Weald itself. In the Rape of Hastings, however, this tenurial arrangement largely came to an end during the course of the eleventh century and although settlement may have been marginally sparser than elsewhere in 1086, it does not seem to have been so much less well developed than in many other areas. Additionally, the value of holdings in Sussex were recorded by Domesday as steadily rising since 1066, and this despite the fall in value caused by the ravages of the Norman army following the Battle of Hastings⁹. In Henhurst Hundred, for example, both Salehurst and Drigsell were wasted although the value of the former had risen from 20 shillings in 1066 to 30 shillings by 1086 and that of the latter from £3 to £4 (Morris 1976, 9, 82; 9,83). This gain in value was typical of the Sussex holdings and contrasts with townships in the Ouse Valley that tended to hold their 1086 value to what it had been in the time of King Edward. The impression is of an expanding economy in the South East of England in the eleventh century.

⁹ A significant number of Domesday entries testify to this 'wasting', notably in Henhurst, which must have been on the direct line-of-march of the Norman army (Round & Salzmann 1973, 363).

Any conclusions drawn from this exploration of eleventh-century settlement in this part of the Weald remain tentative, although still informative. Domesday gives us a privileged glimpse of a pattern of settlement not yet always revealed to us by name, but demonstrating a similar model of small farmsteads that are recognisable in today's landscape.

Table 10.1a: Summary of Resources at Henhurst Hundred Recorded in Domesday Survey

Settlement Location	Hidage	Ploughs	Villains	Bordars	Serfs	Church*	Priest	Mill	Fishery	Meadow	Woodland	Market
HENHURST HUNDRED, SUSSEX [comprising the parish of Salehurst, part Etchingham and others]												
SALEHURST	0.5	7	7	8		1				16 acres		
DRIGSELL	3.75	14	18	6						10 acres	20 swine	
BURGHAM**	0.5	2	2			[chapel?]						
UH	0.5	1	1 [tenant]							6 acres	6 swine	
UH	1	6	8	3								
UH	0.5	1		1				1		3 acres	1 swine	
UH	0.25	1	1							10 acres		
UH (PRO)	1	3	4									
UH (PRO)	0.5	1	1	4				1	2	11 acres	6 swine	
UH (PRO)	0.5	3		5					1			
UH (PRO)	0.88	3	6									
UH (PRO)	0.5	1	1							3 acres	1 swine	
UH (PRO)	0.5		1	1								
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	1									
UH (PRO)	0.5	4	4	2	1					5 acres	2 swine	
UH (PRO)	0.25	1.5	3									
UH (PRO)	0.5	5 oxen	2	1								
UH (PRO)	2.5	5 oxen	4									
UH (PRO)	0.13		1									
UH (PRO)	0.38	1	2									
UH (PRO)	0.13	1	2	2								
HENHURST TOTALS	13.5	52.5	70	30	1	1		2	3	64 acres	36 swine	

UH = Unnamed Holding

UH (PRO) = Unnamed Holding (Pevensey Rape Outlier)

* Both Kent and Sussex Domesday under-recorded churches, but other documentary sources indicate where churches existed about the time of Domesday and these have been included in the table within [-].

** There is some confusion as to whether Burgham is the place of that name in Etchingham parish (Hundred of Henhurst) or an as yet unidentified maonr in the Rape of Pevensey. On balance, however, it seems reasonable to assume that it is Burgham in Etchingham.

**Table 10.1b: Summary of Resources at Shoyswell and Staple Hundreds
Recorded in Domesday Survey**

Settlement Location	Hidage	Ploughs	Villains	Bordars	Serfs	Church*	Priest	Mill	Fishery	Meadow	Woodland	Market
SHOYSWELL HUNDRED, SUSSEX [comprising Ticehurst parish and part Etchingham and others]												
HAZELHURST	4.5	11	10	2		1					10 swine	
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	2									
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	2									
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	1									
UH (PRO)	0.25	1		3						15 acres		
UH (PRO)	0.25	2		3							2 swine	
UH (PRO)	0.25	1		1								
UH (PRO)	0.13			1								
UH (PRO)	0.25	3	4									
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	1									
UH (PRO)	0.5	2		1								
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	1									
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	1				1					
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	1									
UH (PRO)	1	4	3							2 acres		
UH (PRO)	1.38	5	9									
UH (PRO)	0.75	2	3									
UH (PRO)	0.5	2	2									
UH (PRO)	0.25		[tenant]									
UH (PRO)	0.25	1	2									
UH (PRO)	0.5	2		3								
UH (PRO)	0.25	2	3									
SHOYSWELL TOTALS	12.5	45	45	14		1	1			17 acres	12 swine	
STAPLE HUNDRED (Pte), SUSSEX [parishes of Ewhurst and Bodiam only]												
Manor of EWHURST	3	10	12	10	4	[1]				12 acres	10 swine	
Sub-manor of BODIAM	1.75	6	7	10		[chapel?]						
Ewhurst/Bodiam TOTALS	4.75	16	19	20	4	[2]				12 acres	10 swine	

Table 10.2: Settlement Density: Sussex High Weald and Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley Compared

Sussex High Weald				Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley			
HUNDRED	Estimated Acreage	PLOUGHS	HOUSEHOLDS	TOWNSHIPS	Estimated Acreage	PLOUGHS	HOUSEHOLDS
Hawksborough	12,890	77.5	101	Brampton	3,557	18	41
Henhurst	10,750	52.5	101	Buckden	3,096	21	57
Shoyswell	10,770	45	59	Eaton Socon	7,602	32	93
				Eynesbury	7,722	55	68
				Hartford	3,047	12	33
				Paxton	4,269	39	68
				Slepe	5,225	29.5	62
TOTALS	34,410	175	261	TOTALS	34,518	206.5	422
Acres per plough/ household		197:01:00	132:01:00	Acres per plough/ household		167:01:00	82:01:00

Table: 10.3 Acreage to Plough/ Household Ratios: Sussex High Weald and Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley Compared

SETTLEMENT GROUP	Acreage to Plough Ratio	Acreage to Household Ratio
Hawksborough Hundred	166:1	128:1
Henhurst Hundred	205:1	106:1
Shoyswell Hundred	239:1	183:1
Bexhill Hundred (Rape of Hastings coastal hundred)	172:1	72:1
Ouse 'Wood pasture'	166:1	82:1
Ouse 'Fenland'	374:1	129:1
Ouse 'Riverside'	165:1	56:1

The Kent Parishes

Medieval Kent had a particular tenorial and administrative arrangement that involved a complex relationship between local manorial estates and the county's administrative divisions, the lathes and hundreds. Lathes were an ancient territorial division of the county whose origins are not known for certain, but are believed to have originated when Kent was an independent kingdom (Witney 1976, 31). The number, and even the names of the lathes changed over time, but when Domesday was compiled the three parishes in the study area were in the Lathe of Lyminge; excepting the northern portion of Benenden, which was situated in the Lathe of Wye (Morgan 1983, Maps & Key)¹⁰. The Kentish hundreds were a later introduction into the administrative system for the county, although the exact date of their introduction is not known either (Everitt 1986, 271). However, they are (as in Sussex) numerous and generally small, often centred on a single manorial estate and do not conform to the concept of the hundred as being a land division ideally containing one hundred hides or the land for a hundred significant households. Following Jolliffe and Witney it is now generally accepted that early Kentish land tenure involved a system of extended estates. By the time of Domesday the typical arrangement was for a head manor in the northern divisions of the county to possess detached holdings (usually referred to as 'dens') stretching southwards into the Weald (Witney 1976, 120-121).

Kentish Domesday set out the various holdings of the King, the Church and other tenants in chief within the lathes and hundreds where

¹⁰ In the thirteenth century there was a reorganisation of local government in Kent and the Lathe of Wye and the Lathe of Lyminge were absorbed into a newly formed Lathe of Scray. Within that the seven hundreds of the Weald (Berkley; Barnfield; Blackborne; Cranbrook; Rolvenden; Selbritten; and Tenterden) were grouped into a Bailiwick within the Lathe (Morgan 1983, notes; Lawson 2004, 59).

they were located, with the manorial assessment recorded under the township within which the caput of the manor was situated. Consequently in those areas of the Weald where, in 1086, most settlement was dependent on an alien manor then little Wealden settlement was recorded in Domesday: in fact, within the High Weald itself very few independent settlements are visible. This is not though, an indication of scarcity of permanent settlement, but a reflection of the degree of dependency of these areas on manors lying outside the Weald.

Somehow, from the little information that is available it is necessary to try to determine what level of settlement there was in the Weald in the eleventh century. The size of the task will be appreciated when it is understood that of the four hundreds that share a part of Benenden parish alone, only Rolvenden and Selbritten appear in Domesday (Morgan 1983, 5,180; 2, 27); whilst the hundreds of Cranbrook, and Barclay are not mentioned. The neighbouring hundreds of Tenterden and Barnfield (later East and West Barnfield) are also not mentioned, but Oxney and Blackborne are recorded. Thus, in the Kentish parishes under investigation in this study we have some limited knowledge of Domesday settlement simply from looking at the text of the survey, but not enough from this source alone to understand the extent of settlement in the eleventh century.

Fortunately, other contemporary texts survive that bring complementary evidence to bear on the state of settlement in eleventh-century Kent. For the eastern Weald the most relevant document is the Domesday Monachorum (DM), a manuscript that contains a number of lists of churches as well as a version of the Exchequer Domesday recording lands held by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Rochester, and the monks in Kent (Neilson 1974, 253). The DM is in an early twelfth

century hand but is generally considered to be a copy of an earlier manuscript (Morgan 1983, *see notes*). A second document, the Inquisitions of St Augustine's, Canterbury (sometimes referred to as the *Excerpta*) is a thirteenth century copy of an original made in or before 1087 (Morgan 1983, *see notes*). The significance of these church lists as a source for the establishment of churches prior to 1100 has been unpicked by Ward (Ward 1933). Internal evidence in the church lists in the DM indicates that they were most probably drawn up in their present form in the opening years of Lanfranc's time as archbishop, soon after 1070 and furthermore that they were based on earlier Saxon documents (Ward 1933, 60-61). Another key text, the Textus Roffensis (TR), lists the churches and chapels in the Rochester Diocese (covering the western part of Kent), a document that was written about 1115. However, Ward (1932, pp. 54-59) makes out a strong case for this being a copy of an earlier document probable written not later than 1089, which also possibly lists Saxon churches originating in some cases before the Conquest. Therefore, most of the churches listed in the DM or TR seem to have been in existence by the time of Domesday Survey.

Another way of attempting to unravel the early incidents of settlement is to attempt to identify the location of the dens held by alien manors. The dens within the parishes of Rolvenden, Newenden, and Benenden belonged principally to upland manors in the Domesday lathes of Lyminge and Wye, but the northeastern lathes of Thanet and Eastry also had some dens here. Various writers, including Hasted (1799) and Furley (1878), have attempted in the past to identify the names, location and parent manor of the Wealden dens, but the most authoritative list remains that drawn up by Witney

(Witney 1976, 207-275)¹¹. Based on the information provided by Hasted and Furley, Witney used documentary evidence from as early as the eighth century as well as later medieval and early modern documents. From his list it is possible to identify broad groups of parishes within which the dens of the various manors were located, but there is insufficient information to identify the dens in use at the time of Domesday with any certainty. It is possible to gauge the overall wealth of the manors that Witney has identified in relation to the relevant group of Wealden parishes of which Benenden, Newenden and Rolvenden were part; some of these dens, however, were in Tenterden and Sandhurst and these have to be included as it is not possible to satisfactorily separate them out. The twenty-five parent manors thus identified possessed altogether nearly six hundred ploughs and over seventeen hundred households. If, for example, only 10% of these households were located in this group of High Weald parishes (with a combined estimated area of 26,412 acres) the ratio (as applied to the Sussex High Weald above) would be 108:1, comparable to that of the Hundred of Henhurst. Whilst this is pure speculation, it is interesting to note that the proportion of the hidage belonging to the Pevensey manors located as outliers in the Rape of Hastings was about 14%, so the guesswork for the Kent outliers may not be too improbable¹². However, the only certainties that exist for this part of Domesday High Weald are the entries for Rolvenden and Selbritten hundreds. Table 10.4 shows the paucity of this information, but it is not without some interest.

¹¹ Lists for some individual parishes and manors have been attempted, notable for Little Chart (Ward 1946) and more recently for Benenden (Pollard & Strouds 2005).

¹² This based on Domesday entries for the hidage of those Pevensey manors with outliers recorded in the Rape of Hastings. The value for these manors is recorded as 300.25 hides and their outliers are 48.625 hides (Morris 1983).

It is not possible to draw firm conclusions about the state of settlement in the eastern Kent High Weald from these three entries alone, but the general tenor of these entries accords, not surprisingly, with those found over the border in Sussex — a countryside of small settlements. Newenden is unusual in having a market and a larger than expected number of households for the size of its hidage assessment and the number of recorded ploughs, and this may be connected to the presence of a market here (although none here are listed as ‘townsmen’). Domesday Monachorum includes Newenden as a demesne manor of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Neilson 1974, 262b) and Witney believed that three dens restored to the Archbishop by Odo of Bayeux just before Domesday were those of Lossenham (in Newenden itself), Wassal and Hexden (Witney 1976, 268-274)¹³. If so, this could account for the relatively high pannage dues for this rather small manor¹⁴.

The local importance of Newenden may have been due to its strategic position at the confluence of the Rother and the Hexden Channel and the fact that the Rother was navigable to the sea from this point (Eddison 1985, 97). In this respect Newenden is similar to Bodiam on the Sussex side, which also occupied a strategic position at the head of the navigable Rother, but a few miles further inland. Multiple earthworks at about the five metre level at the end of the promontory at Newenden marks a succession of defensive positions, the earliest probable being that of the Saxon burgh

¹³ The dens of Wassal and Hexden are in Rolvenden hundred now, but were possibly in the Hundred of Selbritten at the time. The hundred boundaries were fluid and, for example, in a document dated 38, Henry III, Newenden itself is listed as a quarter in Rolvenden Hundred (Greenstreet (ed.) 1900, 221).

¹⁴ A swine rent of 40 swine implies pannage for about 400 animals. Although these individual entries don’t specifically mention that this area was greatly wooded, Rackham has estimated that based on rent-swine figures the total area of woodland for the whole of the Weald in 1086 could have been about 600,000 acres, or 70% of total acreage (Rackham 2003, 126).

called in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle *Eorpeburnan* which was destroyed whilst still incomplete by the Vikings in 892 (Kent HER: SMR number TQ 82 NE 1-KE2708)¹⁵. The second, superimposed on the northeast corner of the earlier structure is the remains of a thirteenth century motte and bailey castle built as a defence against French raiders, known as Castle Toll (Kent HER: National Monument No. 12841)¹⁶. The construction of a Saxon burgh here supports the belief that there was a serious level of permanent settlement in the eastern High Weald by the eighth century, and by implication even more so by the eleventh century. Although much of its history is obscure, Newenden continued as a small river port well into the twentieth century and its status as a township separate from the rest of Newenden parish was recorded as late as the tithe survey of 1840¹⁷.

Selbritten, Rolvenden, Blackborne, and Oxney — Domesday hundreds in the extreme eastern side of the High Weald — all recorded as having holdings independent of external manors, which suggests that their greater accessibility by water may have created the conditions for the early emancipation of local manors: a process that would occur within other High Weald hundreds during the course of the Middle Ages (Witney 1976, 164-

¹⁵ The presence of the earthworks associated with this early *burgh* is not in doubt, but whether this was *Eorpeburnan* is contested. Gardiner supports the case for and I have followed his lead (Gardiner 1999, 30).

¹⁶ On the other side of the Hexden Channel in the parish of Rolvenden, opposite Castle Toll, is the site of Lowden, a complex thirteenth century moated manorial site (also on the five metre mark) that may be a corresponding, but purely local defensive site in response to the French threat (Kent HER: SMR No. TQ 82 NE 2-KE2709).

¹⁷ The exact status of Newenden in the Middle Ages remains an enigma. Apart from its market it was an important bridging point on the Rother on the road from London to Rye and Winchelsea and a small Carmelite priory was established there in 1442 (the third in the country). Its decline may have been accelerated by the introduction of Flemish weavers into Cranbrook by Edward III in 1332, by which the cloth industry became established and also by the creation of Tenterden as a limb of the Cinque Ports with the growth of Small Hythe as a trading port. However, the population of the township was so diminished by 1700 that the parish church was considered to be too big for the local community to maintain and the steeple, chancel and south aisle were demolished (Kent HER-TQ 82 NM 1 & 3-KE2714/16; Hasted 1792, vol. vii, 171).

173). Domesday evidence, together with that for the existence of a far larger number of churches than those recorded in Domesday, suggests that, as in Sussex, there was widespread settlement in the High Weald of Kent by the eleventh century. This further undermines the idea that the Weald was somehow uniquely different in terms of its settlement pattern to other parts of the South East prior to the early modern period.

Table 10.4 — Summary of Resources in Selbrittenen and Rolvenden Hundreds in Domesday

Settlement Location	Hidage [Sulungs]	Ploughs	Villains	Bordars	Serfs	Church [*]	Woodland	Market
ROLVENDEN HUNDRED, KENT [comprising the parish of Rolvenden and part of Benenden]								
BENENDEN	0.5	3	4	9		1	5 swine	
Den belonging to manor of BELICE (Hayne Hundred)	0.125	0.5	2			[1]		
SELBRITTENDEN HUNDRED, KENT [comprising the parishes of Newenden and Sandhurst]								
NEWENDEN	1	5	25	4		[1]	40 swine	1

Churches, Parishes and Hundreds

The importance of the parish, as both a contemporary administrative unit and as the basis for the analysis of *place* today, justifies further explanation of its origins and relationship with other historic units of administrative organisation in the High Weald. Further examination of Domesday Monachorum helps to explain not only what places were extant in the eleventh century, but also something of their relevant importance. The structure and significance of DM has been demonstrated above, but it is what can be inferred from it about local Wealden churches that is of interest here. The first list is of those churches owing dues to the archbishop for chrism at Easter and the amount is an indication of the status of the church

concerned: thus, for example, Appledore (a late Saxon minster church on the eastern boundary of the area under discussion, and also included with other minsters in the third list of churches in the DM [Riddler 2004, 33]) had a customary due of seven shillings (twelve times the minimum payment of seven pence). The other churches in the eastern High Weald within the first list were Sandhurst, Rolvenden, Woodchurch, Benenden, and Cranbrook, which were all assessed at twenty-eight pence paid directly to the archbishop and possibly indicating their status as parish churches. St. Peter's, Newenden, however, appears in the second list as a church subordinate to Lyminge, and Hawkhurst as subordinate to Wye. The third list, after mentioning the dues owed to the minster churches "before the coming of Lord Lanfranc as Archbishop", also includes the churches "of the tenure of St. Augustus and beyond" (considered as a fourth list by Neilson [Neilson 1974, 257a]) and amongst them is Stone in Oxney and Tenterden (both owing 7d). This suggests that all the churches that are recorded in later medieval records in this part of the High Weald were already in existence by the eleventh century. If, as is probable, they were also effectively parish churches, then the Weald can claim to have had a more complete complement of churches in the eleventh century than is found, for example, in Huntingdonshire. There, the full complement of its medieval churches was not achieved until at least the twelfth century, when many were also still subordinate chapelries. The inference must be that there was sufficient permanent settlement to support these churches, and this paints a more encouraging and complete picture of settlement distribution than is implied by Domesday alone. It also suggests that in this respect the process of church building and parish formation in the Kent High Weald was in advance of that in East Sussex, although the situation remains uncertain for lack of a contemporary survey similar to Domesday Monachorum.

The Sussex evidence for eleventh-century churches is piecemeal and, other than churches recorded in Domesday, relies either on information gathered from charters (such as that connected with the foundation of St Mary's free chapel at Hastings) or deductions from the list of churches contained in the *Taxatio* of Pope Nicholas IV of 1291 (Rushton 1999, fig. 2, Appendix 2). The Domesday Book mentions a church at Salehurst in the Hundred of Henhurst and another in Shoyswell hundred at Hazelhurst in what is now the parish of Ticehurst (Morris (ed.) 1976, 9,82; 9,60), although it is unclear whether the churches at Hazelhurst and Ticehurst were different churches on separate sites, or an earlier and later name for the same site. A church was mentioned at Ewhurst about the time of Domesday in the Chichester Cartulary, this church is believed to have been a late Saxon minster (Rushton 1999, 141 fig. 5), and it was also one of those granted as a prebendary to Hastings College at its foundation (or re-establishment) by the Count of Eu sometime before 1086 (Gardiner 1989, 44). It is possible that Ewhurst's original *parochia* could have extended over the hundreds of Henhurst and Shoyswell prior to the establishment of Salehurst and Hazelhurst, which each seem to have originally been the churches for their individual hundred. However, if this was so their previous relationship left no sign in the evidence that has survived from the eleventh century. Bodiam was also mentioned during the eleventh century in the Chichester Cartulary. Etchingham does not appear to have had its own church until later and an earlier church mentioned in the *Taxatio* as being at Burgham, a short distance away from the present church, appears to have been a Chapelry in Salehurst. Etchingham was not formally established as a separate ecclesiastical parish until it obtained burial rights in 1362, and the present church was built soon after (Saul 1986, 140). It is impossible to arrive at a

verifiable chronology for the Sussex churches in the Rape of Hastings. As elsewhere in England evidence for parishes' formation was emerging in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in Sussex and (as happened in Kent) the new better-defined boundaries were often out of keeping with the existing hundred boundaries.

Generally speaking, not only were hundreds much smaller in Kent and Sussex than elsewhere, but also their boundaries did not necessarily form the basis for the newer parishes that emerged alongside them. The exact date when parish boundaries became clearly demarcated is unknown, but must have been soon after their foundation, driven by the need to ascertain with certainty land from which tithes could be derived (Morris 1989, 210). However, they tended once established to remain fixed for long periods¹⁸. On the other hand, hundred boundaries are even more difficult to tie down and in the High Weald were not clearly demarcated until the work of the Ordnance Survey in the nineteenth century — and even this attempt met with imperfect results (Pollard & Stroud 2005, 46). As discussed above, in Kent at least, and possibly in Sussex too, the hundred boundaries could change periodically and without universally agreed limits. A particular feature of the High Weald hundreds was their division into 'boroughs' (Kent) or 'tithings' (Sussex) that brought together dispersed farmsteads and hamlets into sub-hundredal groupings (Winchester 1990, 21). However, it is difficult to find evidence for any territorial boundaries between these subdivisions and it is probable that none ever existed, at least in the sense that is associated with the clear crisp line of a parish boundary. It seems possible, therefore, that in the High Weald membership of a hundred and one of its

¹⁸ The first radical shake up of parish boundaries did not take place until the nineteenth century, and this was to the civil parishes and was caused by the administrative needs of the time (Hey (ed.) 1998, 340).

subdivisions, although broadly territorial, was more a matter of establishing the identity of a household within a particular hundredal jurisdiction — rather than using a well defined geographical boundary to predetermine within which jurisdiction a household lay.

Over time these early territorial divisions, with the notable exception of the parish, have become redundant from an administrative point of view. However, In terms of how people today may experience local identity, awareness of the previous existence of them (particularly the hundred) may still have relevance. Even tithings or boroughs, because of their topological associations may still be experienced as ‘natural’ topographic areas within a locality — an idea that needs further investigation.

COMMENTARY

The lack of clear and unequivocal evidence for the extent of early settlement in the area is a problem, although it is clear that the administrative framework was designed to manage a complex and recognisable pattern of settlement. This framework was a systematic attempt to provide adequate local government, and the changes and adjustments that took place within it during the course of the Middle Ages might be seen as the sign of a dynamic process rather than one of uncertainty. For example, despite the deficiencies in the Domesday record for some of the Kent hundreds, they were appearing as a matter of form in documents by the thirteenth century (Greenstreet (ed.) 1900, 221). The system of lathes or rapes, hundreds and their sub-divisions were only superseded slowly by the emergence of the civil parish as an administrative unit from the sixteenth century onwards, and did not finally succumb until local government re-organisation in the nineteenth century.

Although many earlier commentators believed that settlement in this area was particularly sparse, it is probably not the case that the High Weald was less settled than many other areas of the country — even if it was not nearly as densely settled as areas like northeast Norfolk. In other words, it fell within a range of settlement density that would be considered quite normal in other parts of the lowland zone: for example, in the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley. Likewise, church building and parish organisation in the High Weald was at a stage that is recognisable elsewhere, although in Kent (perhaps under the influence of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Rochester) it was possibly more advanced, which strengthens the argument that the High Weald had a well established settlement pattern with a reasonably well developed density of population.

The picture that emerges is that (as was the case in the Ouse Valley) the settlement pattern in the High Weald was already, by the eleventh century, similar to what can be seen in a more developed form by the sixteenth century. The record of place names reinforces this view, and eleventh-century documents such as Domesday Monachorum, the Textus Roffensis and Domesday itself, cumulatively indicate the existence of many of the major places by this date. Additionally there is the evidence of pre-Conquest charters that refer to a number of lesser places such as dens, which have often survived as farm names (Witney 1976, 196-200; Brandon 2003, 48-50; Wallenberg 1931 & 1934). Similarly, many surviving farms and hamlets appear in later medieval documents from the thirteenth century onwards. All this suggests that there has been a strong continuity in settlement *pattern* from the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries through the early modern period to the nineteenth century. Less, however, is known about settlement *form* over this same period, although the survival

of later building styles, techniques and materials suggest a steady development in morphology to match the steady increase in population and economic opportunities.

If Domesday statistics for the High Weald indicate an expanding economy in the eleventh century, the process accelerated during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Brandon 2003, 91-94); for example, the Battle Abbey estate (part of which was in Bodiam) had quadrupled its rental value by 1124 (Searle 1974, 22). Despite these advances, the High Weald (with the exception of Newenden) remained lightly populated compared to other parts of the southeast, and the lay subsidy of 1334/5 (just before the Black Death in 1348) indicates that the tax assessment per thousand acres was less than £1-5-0, compared to the wealthiest parts of the southeast at over £3 (Lawson & Chalklin 2004, 58). There is no reason to doubt that population decline in the Weald was no less severe than elsewhere as a result of the Black Death. However, there is evidence that the High Weald parishes recovered remarkably quickly economically, particularly in Kent, perhaps because of the importance of trade and industry in the area — notably iron and textiles (Brandon 2003, 97). This diversity was facilitated by the dispersed nature of the settlement pattern where fields were held in severalty. This enabled change to occur in a piecemeal way, where entrepreneurial landholders could act independently; something not possible in the common field economies found in Huntingdonshire.

It is likely that settlement patterns and overall morphology were alike in many respects in both Kent and Sussex throughout the Middle Ages, although there were also some real differences between them. In Kent, the tenorial geography that placed much of the High Weald under the control of manors based elsewhere in the county persisted well into the thirteenth

and even fourteenth centuries, particularly in the eastern Weald. In Sussex, on the other hand this pattern of manorial outliers was brought to a rapid end with the re-organisation of the Rapes into coherent baronies after the Conquest. Consequently, whilst in the Sussex High Weald this resulted in stronger and more centralised manors emerging, in Kent the strain placed on distant head manors brought the slow decline of manorial power in the High Weald outliers. In the short-term manorial organisation passed to a number of small local manors, but also many manorial rights became devolved to ordinary farmers (Du Boulay 1966).

From the point of view of managing the historic environment in the High Weald, there are a number of pertinent issues. The first is that key elements of the modern settlement pattern can be traced back to at least the eleventh century, and that the parish structure was completed (at least in Kent) comparatively early. Although settlement origins may seem remote, early settlement has significantly influenced the contemporary settlement pattern. Secondly, less is known for certain about settlement *form* prior to the seventeenth century — issues explored in the following two chapters.

Finally, it is suggested that perceptions of place today are influenced by what people believe to have happened in the past. In the Weald, stories about early settlement by colonisation and transhumance appear to have had an impact on how both communities and local authorities understand the significance of the Wealden landscape, perceptions that may influence future development decisions. Getting the story right seems important, and in the final chapter how the interpretative narrative can inform and guide estimations of the value and significance of historical assets and settlement form, in advance of local planning and management decisions, is further discussed.

CHAPTER 11: SIX WEALDEN PARISHES — CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN SETTLEMENT MORPHOLOGY

“The site on Syon Park would have been an attractive place for a settlement because it lay between the road and the Thames ... The land was easy to cultivate and the presence of the road would have given the community another source of income from travelers wanting refreshment and lodging...”¹

¹ Quote from Jo Lyon, Museum of London Archaeology, upon the recent discovery of significant Roman remains at Syon Park, just outside London, at the site of a planned luxury hotel (18th November, 2010, CNN).

INTRODUCTION

The High Weald falls into that part of the lowland zone that Rackham has described as ‘ancient countryside’ (Rackham 1986, fig. 1.3), a classification that suggests underlying continuity in terms of the development of the landscape. Within ancient countryside, as elsewhere, the determination of how settlement patterns have developed over long time periods turns on the identification of morphogenic periods — how evidence for continuity and change is recognised within the landscape. It is arguably more difficult to identify morphological periods where there are no clear horizons in development of the kind found in, for example, areas of general enclosure. However, change of a more subtle kind has occurred in the High Weald. Adjustments in land use, the rise and decline of local industry, and the development of land tenure have continued to influence how settlement and its landscape have developed. It is, therefore, in the accumulation of small-scale change, rather than the sweeping movements of comprehensive reform, that the evolution of the Wealden landscape must be sought². It is this quality that makes study of the High Weald on a parish-by-parish basis so rewarding — and necessary if the subtleties of local settlement morphology are to be understood, appreciated, and have a beneficial impact on development decisions.

Explaining what has caused the landscape to be how it is today, defining its character and promoting its significance is of primary importance for those currently engaged in the preservation of an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, like the High Weald. Often this means

² The Black Death was obviously very disruptive and the High Weald of eastern Sussex and Kent was as badly affected as elsewhere. However, although this was a temporary setback in socio-economic terms it did not permanently interrupt or otherwise alter the general development of settlement morphology (Brandon & Short 1990, 101-103).

identifying past socio-economic systems that confer cultural relevance to surviving physical landscape features. This is an approach that has become a major concern within the current planning regime, which is expected to determine whether development proposals will damage the nature of the area's special character.

Relating such processes to morphogenic periods would be useful, but finding a methodology to support this approach in ancient countryside is not easy. In both the Ouse Valley and the High Weald the eleventh and twelfth centuries was a period of parish building and township creation — a morphogenic period effecting all settlement. In the Ouse Valley, however, it is also possible to identify subsequent *event horizons*, such as Parliamentary Inclosure, where a new morphogenic period could be discerned in a very clear way. In the High Weald parishes it has not been possible to establish morphogenic periods with such a widespread effect on settlement prior to the urbanisation of rural settlement in more recent times — although individual settlements have their own local morphological histories. Consequently, to assist in the analysis of long periods of apparent continuity a different approach has been adopted predicated on 'benchmarking'. That is, using a form of analysis that takes one specified period as representative of all and against which changes in the landscape from different periods can be assessed. In this study the benchmark chosen is the tithe surveys of the late 1830's and early 1840's. Whereas the Huntingdonshire Inclosure Awards record a *specific change* in the landscape that obliterated much of the previous organisation and management of the land over a fairly short period of time, the Wealden tithe surveys record a *stage* in a landscape that is in a process of incremental change over a long time frame.

Benchmarking in the High Weald

Benchmarking relies on a set of comprehensive data for a defined period, the identification of key themes within the data set, and a range of comparable data from other periods for analysis. For example, the tithe surveys illustrate how the settlement pattern had evolved in each parish by the opening years of the nineteenth century, providing the historian with an unprecedented set of contemporary records, applied consistently for each parish at one point in time over a range of themes. Collectively, these surveys show a landscape dominated by scattered farmsteads with some clustering of homesteads and farmsteads at the occasional hamlet. The farmsteads, of course, relate to specific landholdings and their distribution, therefore, will reflect the number and size of farms. Farm sizes are recorded in the 'apportionments' together with the tenurial arrangements for each holding, which shows the owners and occupiers of land; useful information linking socio-economic factors to landscape. Many (but unfortunately not all) Wealden tithe surveys also record the state of cultivation for what was an allegedly pastoral economy; however the reality seems to indicate that convertible agriculture or mixed farming was just as likely to be the reality in individual parishes. These are the kinds of themes covered by this form of benchmarking data, and by reflecting on the nature of farms, their relationship to large estate centres and other elements of settlement it is possible to explore the processes that maintained the Wealden settlement pattern for so long.

In the tithe surveys, for example, nineteenth-century farm sizes are one indication of how the owners and occupiers of land (the men and women who controlled the farming community) balanced the limitations and opportunities of the land with the economic realities of the agricultural

market and the social expectations of the community. Much has been written around this, often in the context of regional, or sub-regional agricultural systems (Thirsk 1987; Baker & Butlin (eds.) 1973). Within the context of the High Weald an important aspect of this general debate has been the question of what makes an economical land unit for the support of rural communities, and how stable such units have been: in effect, the size of farms and how farm sizes have changed over time. Within the context of the national debate there is widespread agreement that there was a decline in the number of smaller farms from at least the eighteenth century to the present day (Mingay 1961; Beckett 1983; Grigg 1987). However, as Wade Martins & Williamson have pointed out, broad generalisations ‘take little account of local and regional variations’ (Wade Martins & Williamson 1999, 77). Local and sub-regional studies have been made for various places — for example, in areas of Parliamentary Inclosure by Turner (1975), and Martin (1979) and in the Sussex Weald itself by Sheppard (1992). Much of this debate has turned around the decline of the small farmer or landowner, but not surprisingly this has proven to be at variance in different localities. There is evidence that in Kent farm sizes had risen as early as the sixteenth century (Zell 1985), and the later evidence considered in this study (which also accords with Sheppard’s findings) suggests that whilst smaller landowners declined in number during the eighteenth century, smaller tenancies remained common until the mid-nineteenth century.

In order to successfully explore the key themes there needs to be detailed evidence available over the quite long time span involved, but the identification of earlier data sets can be quite problematic. Records from the medieval period are incomplete and because they rely on written descriptions of land ownership are sometimes difficult to interpret on the

ground. The situation was eased with the introduction of more accurate spatial surveying techniques from the sixteenth century onwards, when farm plans, estate maps, and even surveyed plans for whole parishes proliferated. The extent of the major surveys (including the tithe surveys) is shown in Table 11.1, and the extent of plans for individual farms and holdings may be gauged from the list of primary sources. Consequently from the early modern period there is better evidence relating to such issues as field sizes, the size of farm units, and the changing patterns of land use. Better recording coincided with the development of agricultural capital production, which started early in the Weald and increased in importance into the modern period (Zell 2000, 73; Brandon & Short 1990, 170). By the time of the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 there was an extensive corpus of documentation about every aspect of the landscape and settlement in the High Weald, some of which relates to individual properties (for example, title and mortgage deeds and farm leases) but also documents of a more general nature about owners and occupiers within the hundreds and parishes; such as can be found in hearth tax returns and the land tax returns³. To these may be added various written accounts of how settlement was experienced by individuals of the time, like the surveys and topographical observations of William Marshall (Marshall 1798) and William Cobbett (Cobbett 1983).

In the rest of this chapter the tithe surveys for this part of the High Weald are explored in greater detail, other sources of information about parish settlement from different periods are discussed, and an analysis based

³ Modern archaeological evidence complements the historic written, cartographic and pictorial record. It is accepted, however, that the archaeological record of Wealden sites is still disappointing compared to other places (Gardiner, 1990). However, the level of recording is improved since Gardiner's review was made, even though the number of excavated sites remains disappointingly low by comparison to other areas.

on this information offered for each parish. This analysis ranges from the eleventh century to the nineteenth and attempts to explain important differences between land holdings, settlement distribution and morphology in each parish.

Table 11.1 Parish and Major Estate Surveys

PARISH	YEAR	DESCRIPTION	SURVEYOR
BENENDEN	1777	Full parish survey giving details of the Hempstead estate as well as non-estate farms and holdings.	Jos: Hodskinson
	1779	Hempstead Estate Survey based on the 1777 survey, including holdings in the parishes of Benenden, Hawkhurst, Rolvenden, Biddenden, Newenden, Cranbrook and Sandhurst.	Hodskinson
	1801	Description and value of farms in the Hempstead estate in the parishes of Benenden, Rolvenden, Biddenden, Newenden, Cranbrook and Peasemmarsh.	John Josselyn
	1839	Tithe Survey of the parish of Benenden partly based on Hodskinson's work.	Based on Hodskinson
	1861	Hempstead Estate Survey, showing holdings in Benenden, Sandhurst, Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Biddenden and Rolvenden.	
BODIAM	1671	Survey of Bodiam Manor lands in the parish of Bodiam.	Thomas Russell
	1839	Tithe Survey of the Parish of Bodiam.	John Barnes
ETCHINGHAM	1837/9	Tithe Survey of the Parish of Etchingham.	George Want
NEWENDEN	1839	Tithe Survey of the Parish of Newenden.	John Adams
ROLVENDEN	1771	Hole Park Estate Survey, including holdings in Rolvenden, Benenden, Tenderden, Biddenden and Staplehurst. [not extant]	Richardson
	1828	Survey of Rolvenden Parish, including holdings of the Hole Park Estate situated in Benenden, Biddenden, Tenterden, Wittersham and Staplehurst. Presented in various formats.	John Adams
	1839	Tithe Survey partly based on 1828 survey by J Adams.	R D W Dearn
SALEHURST	1841	Tithe Survey of the parish of Salehurst.	Unknown

NARRATIVE

Parish Morphology, Tenure, and Settlement

It was argued in the last chapter that tenurial history differs in some respects between the Sussex parishes and those in Kent. In the Rape of Hastings landholding was structured in a deliberate administrative act immediately following the Conquest, and the pattern of landholding following this decision developed into the series of manors and sub-manors that underlay the post medieval system of estates in this part of Sussex. In Kent the system of landholding developed from that inherited from a pre-Conquest tenurial system, where Wealden lands were dependant on manors to the north and east of the Weald. Between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries (and largely by the thirteenth) this system had broken down allowing the creation of some small local manors and other tenurial arrangements that, although preserving a loose dependency upon the original alien manors, allowed for a greater fluidity in the land market (Chester-Kadwell 2004, 59-64). Unlike in Sussex, there were no copyholders, most land was 'freehold' and could be alienated at will during the lifetime of the owner, and by will at his or her death — any residual manorial fines were small (Everitt 1986, 55-56). Under the Custom of Kent inheritance was by equal division between the heirs and this added a further impetus to the land market, so that it was possible to buy into land relatively easily (Slater 1974, 338). This led, in the early modern period, to the creation of new estates as well as preserving some of the elements of an earlier medieval pattern of smaller landholding.

The pattern of land ownership in the opening years of the nineteenth century, therefore, was built upon two different variations of medieval tenurial organisation. However, it would appear that these two distinct

traditions did not create a radically different distribution of farmsteads and farms. The reason for this seems to lie within the persistence of the farming units themselves — a reflection of occupation patterns rather than land ownership. However there were differences, albeit subtle and local, because parochial land ownership patterns for each parish acquired a unique tenurial history over time. Helpfully, the tenurial record contained in each of the parish tithe surveys sets out the structures of ownership, occupation and farm size in great detail; this makes possible an assessment of parish land morphology in the nineteenth century. How this developed from the time of the Conquest, for example, is supported by a long, if incomplete, evidential record. The task is to take this record and, using the tithe surveys as a benchmark, construct a morphological profile for each parish as a basis for analysing settlement pattern.

The Parish Tithe Surveys

The parish tithe surveys are truly pivotal to an understanding of the pattern of settlement in the Wealden landscape, its distribution and morphology. They were conducted at that particular point in time before the full effects of a modern industrialised and increasingly urbanised society impinged upon the rural economy. Their comprehensive and detailed recording of ownership and occupation in a systematic and comparable format, alongside accurate maps showing the disposition of settlement in the landscape, has made this survey not only timely but also indispensable to establishing the nature of land tenure in the early years of the nineteenth century — on the cusp between the early modern and modern periods. Thus, just as the basis of modern-day settlement pattern can be traced back to these surveys, there are many aspects of the medieval settlement pattern to be seen within the tithe survey record.

Background to the Tithe Surveys and Method of Analysis

Tithes, the payment of one tenth of the produce of the land, have a long and contentious history. A tax that was enforced by law from the eighth century, tithes became increasingly loathed and resented especially by the poor, and eventually also by religious non-conformists who saw them as a tax to support a church to which they owed no allegiance. During the agricultural depression that followed the Napoleonic Wars, tithes were perceived as particularly oppressive for the smaller tenant farmer (for which the tithes were a certain burden on top of inflexible land rents), and agricultural labourers and small holders whose wages and income was depressed by the imposition of the tithes (Kain & Prince 2000, 1-2). In the southeast (as in other parts of the country) there was serious unrest in the 1830s and eventually Parliament was forced to intervene (Kain & Prince 2000, 13-14)⁴. Provision for a fairer system of estimating the value of tithes and agreeing a monetary payment in lieu was eventually formulated under the provisions of the Tithe and Commutation Act of 1836⁵. Tithe surveys are crucial to the understanding of tenure and land management in the six parishes under discussion. Both Kent and Sussex were comprehensively surveyed under the Act and few parishes (and none in the High Weald) had their tithes commuted through alternative procedures such as Inclosure Acts — the exact reverse of the situation in the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley where the extinction of tithes was the norm when Parliamentary Inclosure was applied (Kain & Prince 2000, 10-12).

⁴ The most notorious being the Swing riots of 1830/1, which started in Kent but quickly spread to other parts of the south and east (Hey (ed.) 1998, 431).

⁵ The rent charges associated with tithes were eventually abolished by an Act of 1936 (Hey 1998, 440).

The tithe surveys gain from the fact that they were part of a carefully thought through centrally organised survey that provided an unprecedented opportunity to make direct comparisons between all Wealden parishes. In reality, individual tithe surveys (and especially their accompanying parish plans) could be quite closely related to earlier surveys. For example, in Benenden the tithe commissioners gave permission for the local surveyor to base his survey on a previous one undertaken in 1777 (PRO: IR 18/3502); similarly, in Rolvenden the tithe survey was based on a parish survey of 1828 (PRO: IR 18/3773). In parishes such as these, where tithes had been commuted for a money rent for some time, this was not an unusual arrangement. It may also account for why the Commissioners agreed to waive the necessity for recording the state of cultivation in these two parishes — for the sake of the calculation for rent payment it was not needed as the existing arrangement was for tithe rents to be apportioned on the basis of acreage rather than agricultural output. For the other four parishes in the study area there was no such existing arrangement and the state of cultivation was included. In the Sussex parishes, especially, tithes usually involved quite complex calculations and the tithe agreements bear this out (in particular see the Agreement for Salehurst — ESRO: TD/E86; PRO: IR18/10457); this may reflect the much stronger manorial tradition in these parishes.

The tithe survey for any particular parish not only recorded what the Commissioners actually found there, but also attempted to reconcile existing local practice, which reflected how contemporary landowners and their tenants perceived their holdings and obligations⁶. The objective of the

⁶ The tithe files frequently record additional parish meetings called to resolve differences of perception and opinion, sometimes even after the original tithe agreements have been promulgated — as for example, happened at Rolvenden (PRO: IR 18/3773).

tithe surveys, therefore, was to gain an agreement between the owners of the tithes and those who had to pay. The final Agreement (usually hand written on vellum, but sometimes printed) always prefaces the final version of the 'apportionment', which contains the information relating to the ownership and occupation of all the land in a parish. Individual holdings are divided into 'parcels' of land, measured in acres, roods and perches. Each 'parcel' represented a settlement feature, such as fields, habitation curtilages, woods etc., and either a general indication of land-use or in many cases a very detailed one. The money rate to be paid in lieu of tithes is recorded in the apportionment next to each holding (ironically, now perhaps the least interesting detail), with an aggregated summary in the Agreement. Accompanying the apportionment there is always a plan of the parish showing fields, woods, roads, streams, rivers and ponds, other features relating to agricultural performance (such as marl pits), and the plans of farmsteads, hamlets and villages. The accompanying plans are frequently large and beautifully drawn with lots of local topographical detail, which makes them visually accessible and appealing. However, it is the detail in the more sober apportionment that is so informative to an understanding of the tenurial relationships that existed at the time.

The basic statistical information summarised in the tithe apportionments for each of the six parishes is given in Table 11.2. As can be seen there is some variation in how the information is presented, particularly in regard to land use where sometimes the arable is shown together with the hop grounds and sometimes separately. There are differences in how land not liable to tithes is recorded and especially woodland, which is sometimes simply not mentioned or is included in waste

and other categories⁷. In Etchingham market gardens are identified with hop grounds because both were liable for similar additional rent charge in that parish, whilst the Bodiam agreement records land that was exempted from tithes because it had belonged to Robertsbridge Abbey prior to its dissolution (similar land within Salehurst was simply ignored in the summary, although it was recorded as tithe free under the applicable holdings' entries). The estimated total acreage for Etchingham is, unusually, for the inbound area only⁸, which is approximately 500 acres less than the outbound figure given in the apportionment total acreage — this needs to be born in mind when comparing acreage values.

The detailed tenorial information contained in the apportionments has been analysed to give basic information about ownership, occupation, sizes of holdings and the state of cultivation. These statistics have been copied into a database and linked to a digitalised and georeferenced version of the tithe map for each parish. Key to this process has been the generation of categories that contain the individual holdings by size that can be used as a framework within which the analysis of ownership, occupation and farm sizes can be viewed. This has not been an easy task and the challenge has been to take the numerous holdings identified within the apportionments and group them by size in such a way that the distribution of holdings can

⁷ The summary within the agreement for Salehurst is incomplete, whilst recording the essential acreages for tithe rent purposes (numbers in brackets are recorded in the apportionment, but not in the summary). Rolvenden seems to have a major irregularity in as much as woodland (and possibly the parkland) which were not subject to tithes are not recorded at all in the detail of the summary, but seem to be added into the total acreage subject to tithes when in fact they were not — others, including the Canterbury Cathedral Archive service (the custodians of the original documents) have been unable to fully explain this.

⁸ Field area was measured either from the actual boundaries (outbound) or from the edges of the cultivatable ground (inbound).

be related to the pattern of occupation and land farm management appertaining at the time.

A major issue is to decide where the threshold between a true farm and a smallholding lies — that is the difference between the smaller holdings incapable of supporting a family on subsistence levels and those units considered workable as a farm (a unit that at worst might support a family on subsistence levels). In the event, it was decided to opt for the rather low figure of six acres, based on calculations worked out for subsistence levels for early modern Kent (Chalklin 1965, 68; Zell 2000, 69-72). The early date chosen is considered justified because of the survival rate of this size of holding between the seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries, suggesting that the smaller units, although it is doubtful that they were actually capable of supporting the poorest of families in the nineteenth century, still had real value at the time of the tithe surveys (Chester-Kadwell 2004, 59-66). Therefore, holdings of above six acres are considered as farms, but obviously include a wide range of farming capacity. Frequency tables based on the acreage of the holdings in the six parishes suggest that the higher frequency ranges exist within the holdings of less than 50 acres and based on these the categories of holdings has been more finely divided for the holdings of lower acreage — small changes in acreage seem to have a larger impact on the economic well being of households within this range⁹. Holdings above 50 acres are much more sustainable as farm units and are more likely (on the grounds of common sense if nothing else) to be capable of creating surplus production for the market. Above 400 acres there are very few holdings identifiable as units of production and the greatest in any

⁹ Frequency data was cross referenced with known farm sizes for Wealden holdings from a number of sources including Chalklin (1965); Gardiner (1995); Zell (2000) to produce the range of categories chosen.

of the parishes is about 620 acres. Tables 11.3a and b give a breakdown of holding sizes. This can be seen as resulting in a quite complicated pattern, which has been simplified for farms of six acres and above, as can be seen in Table 11.4. This categorisation underpins the analysis of ownership, occupation and farm sizes given later in the chapter.

Table 11.2 Summary of Tithe Survey Parish Statistics

LAND USE	ROLVENDEN	BENENDEN	NEWENDEN	BODIAM	ETCHINGHAM	SALEHURST
Arable	1,970	N/A	202	485	1,143	N/A
Arable, including Hop Grounds	0	3,351	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,247
Meadow or Pasture	2,240	1,708	742	600	1,243	2,005
Hop Grounds	300	N/A	46	130	200 (hops and market gardens)	N/A
Rectorial Glebe	82	0	3	0	14	
Vicarial Glebe	8	2	0	10	0	
Roads, Waste etc.	90	750	34 (Including woodlands)	306 Plus 32 acres tithe free (Udiam)	50 (Common land)	-71
Hedgerows, gardens & yards	18	744			600 (woodland)	1108 (Woodlands)
TOTAL (of above)	4,708	6,555	1,027	1,563	3,250	
Total Acreage Subject to Tithes	5,514	5,803	990	1,215	2,450	5,359
Total parish acreage by estimation	5,622	6,555	1,044	1,563	3,250	-6,481
Date of Agreement (date of map)	-1839	26/08/1839	8/05/1839 (1838)	7/05/1839 (1839/40)	5/07/1837 (1839)	30/01/1841

Table 11.3a Holdings Statistics for East Sussex Parishes

Holdings East Sussex Parishes	BODIAM			ETCHINGHAM			SALEHURST		
	no of holdings	% of all holdings	% of total acreage	No of holdings	% of all holdings	% of total acreage	no of holdings	% of all holdings	% of total acreage
TYPE									
< 1 acre	4	19	0.2	15	25	0.1	142	51	1
1-5 acres	3	14	0.3	11	18	1	34	12	2
6-15 acres	3	14	2	5	8	2	26	9	4
16-25 acres	3	14	4	6	10	4	19	7	6
26-35 acres	0	0	0	3	5	3	14	5	7
36-49 acres	0	0	0	2	3	2	11	4	7
50-99 acres	2	10	9	3	5	6	16	6	18
100-199	2	10	17	10	17	39	11	4	23
200-299 acres	3	14	47	2	3	13	5	2	18
300-399 acres	1	5	20	2	3	19	1	0	6
400+ acres	0	0	0	1	2	12	1	0.4	8
TOTAL OF ALL HOLDINGS	21			60			280		
total acreage of parish			1586			3715			6410

¹⁰ Colours are to aid visual examination of the Charts and Plans in Appendix F

Table 11.3b Holdings Statistics for Kent Parishes

	BENENDEN			NEWENDEN			ROLVENDEN		
	no of holdings	% of all holdings	% of total acreage	no of holdings	% of all holdings	% of total acreage	no of holdings	% of all holdings	% of total acreage
TYPE									
< 1 acre	19	14	0.1	4	17	0.04	55	38	0.3
1-5 acres	17	12	1	7	29	2	12	8	1
6-15 acres	26	19	4	3	13	2	16	11	3
16-25 acres	16	12	5	3	13	7	11	8	4
26-35 acres	9	7	4	2	8	6	8	6	5
36-49 acres	5	4	4	0	0	0	6	4	5
50-99 acres	31	23	36	1	4	9	16	11	19
100-199	10	7	23	3	13	33	15	10	38
200-299 acres	2	1	7	0	0	0	4	3	18
300-399 acres	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
400+ acres	2	1	17	1	4	40	1	1	8
TOTAL OF ALL HOLDINGS	137			24			144		
total acreage of parish			6411			1033			5529

Table 11.4 Farm Unit Statistics — East Sussex and Kent Parishes

Kent Farm Units	BENENDEN			NEWENDEN			ROLVENDEN		
	no of units	% of all units	% of total acreage	no of units	% of all units	% of total acreage	no of units	% of all units	% of total acreage
6-49 acres	56	55.4	17.18	8	61.5	15.75	41	53.2	16.6
50-199	41	40.6	58.86	4	30.8	43.44	31	40.3	57.62
200-399 acres	2	2	7.29	0	0	0	4	5.2	17.88
>400 acres	2	2	16.67	1	7.7	40.8	1	1.3	7.9
>1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL FARM UNITS	101	100	100	13	100	100	77	100	100
acreage that this represents			6363.5			1007.8			5472
East Sussex Farm Units	BODIAM			ETCHINGHAM			SALEHURST		
	no of units	% of all units	% of total acreage	No of units	% of all units	% of total acreage	no of units	% of all units	% of total acreage
6-49 acres	6	42.9	8.3	17	48.6	10.66	70	67.3	25.06
50-199	4	28.6	32.7	13	37.1	45.9	27	26	41.87
200-399 acres	4	28.6	59.1	4	11.4	31.74	6	5.8	25.03
>400 acres	0	0	0	1	2.9	11.69	1	1	8.04
>1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL FARM UNITS	14	100	100	35	100	100	104	100	100
acreage that this represents			1253.9			3683.1			6267.8

Detailed Results of Tithe Survey Data Analysis

The six Wealden surveys analysed in this study demonstrate many things in common about landownership, occupation and farm sizes within the parishes, but also many differences. Some parishes share one attribute with another, but differ in other ways, so that although there are some important trends, there are also significant dissimilarities: this reiterates the importance of local studies for understanding local conditions. For example, whilst none of the parishes are truly 'close' in terms of landownership some are clearly very much more under the control of a single landowner than others and the effects of such variations can be significant. Land ownership is, of course, only one factor in the tenurial relationship that influences patterns of settlement and land management. Who actually occupies the various holdings into which the land itself is divided is a crucial factor in understanding many of the socio-economic issues surrounding tenure. The size and disposition of the holdings are also an important factor in understanding settlement — both the most productive units (farms large enough to support their occupiers and provide a surplus), which often indicate dispersal, and the smaller units (often without farmsteads built upon them) that may indicate nucleation of settlement. Therefore, the following analysis, although expressed in terms of tenure, never the less has a relationship with settlement pattern. Viewing the map evidence along side the statistical analysis reinforces this relationship.

Ownership and Occupation Patterns for all Sizes of Property Holdings

The tithe surveys are a valuable record of ownership and occupation patterns but caution is needed in the interpretation of the data. For example, a named owner may not be in simple freehold possession and in fact many

of them (and perhaps in some parishes most of the owners — especially those connected to the larger estates) were in actuality benefiting from assets held in a form of trust known as an entail¹¹. Occupiers, also, were not always what they seemed and the term occupier was applied primarily to someone who was responsible for paying the rent charge. The term does not even necessarily tell us who was actually in residence, and although when the occupier is not the owner the assumption is that the named occupier is a tenant the actual tenurial relationship is not defined. So, for example, the owner of a farm may be named as the occupier but this could as easily indicate that a bailiff lives at and, (on a day-to-day basis) manages the property — as happened at Lowden Manor, Rolvenden (CCA: DCb/To/R7A&B). Frequently an occupier is listed as in occupation of a number of cottages or other properties, which in practice turn out to be tied premises each with its own individual resident, but whose tenancy does not exist outside a contract of employment or similar — a common practice in most parishes. However, the existence of an occupier other than the owner is a good indication that the property is a separate holding, which is helpful in understanding the structure of holdings within the parish. In terms of the broader picture occupiers can be viewed as either owner-occupiers or tenant-occupiers (without necessarily needing to ascertain the exact nature of the tenancy — although this may be of interest in other contexts).

The issues that are being explored here about ownership include the number of owners there were, what sizes of property they owned (the number and size-range of holdings), and how much control these

¹¹ By the Second Statute of Westminster, Edward I, 13 in 1285, land could be 'entailed', by which act a form of trust was set up that allowed an individual the right to enjoy the property during his or her lifetime without the right to alienate it. Most large estates became entailed after that date.

landowners wielded over the land resource of each parish and (where this is applicable) within the neighbouring parishes. Perhaps the key question, however, is how ‘open’ or ‘close’ property ownership was in the target parishes — indicative of how much control over landed resources the greater land owners had and, conversely, how much opportunity did the ‘smaller man’ have to acquire real estate and some measure of economic autonomy. This issue is of particular interest in the Weald, where the land market (especially on the Kent side) is considered to have been particularly active throughout most of the later medieval and early modern periods. It would be very worthwhile, therefore, to know whether there is any appreciable difference between land distribution in the Kent parishes and for those parishes in East Sussex. The categories of land-holding sizes identified in Table 11.4 has been used as the basis of analysis and the results regarding ownership are displayed for landowners and their acreage in the Charts 1.1-1.6 in Appendix F, with a simplified breakdown of the relationship between landownership and total parish acreage given in Table 11.5. Additional information on ownership and the range of holdings’ sizes within each category are given in Table 11.6a and b.

TABLE 11.5: Landownership and Parish Acreage

Showing total acreage and number of landowners	OWNERSHIPS less than 50 acres		OWNERSHIPS 50 — 199 acres		OWNERSHIPS 200 — 999 acres		OWNERSHIPS > 1000 acres	
	% No. Owners	% Acreage	% No. Owners	% Acreage	% No. Owners	% Acreage	% No. Owners	% Acreage
BENENDEN [6411a & 70 owners]	63%	10%	33%	35%	3%	11%	1.50%	44%
NEWENDEN [1033a & 22 owners]	77.50%	18%	18%	42%	4.50%	40%	N/A	N/A
ROLVENDEN [5529a & 82 owners]	73%	7%	19.50%	32%	6%	37%	1%	24%
BODIAM [1586a & 20 owners]	60%	7%	20%	26%	20%	67%	N/A	N/A
ETCHINGHAM [3714a & 39 owners]	64%	5%	20%	28%	14%	66.50%	N/A	N/A
SALEHURST [6410a & 104 owners]	82%	6%	11%	19%	4%	41%	1%	34%

Table 11.6a Landowners and Occupation Patterns — East Sussex Parishes

PARISH	BODIAM			ETCHINGHAM			SALEHURST		
		Greatest Acreage	Least Acreage		Greatest Acreage	Least Acreage		Greatest Acreage	Least Acreage
LANDOWNERS	%	20	No.	%	39	No.	%	104	No.
>1-5	30	3	0.4	44	5	0.2	68	6	0.1
6-49 acres	30	25	10	22	27	8	14	45	6
50-199	20	151	54	20	200	61	11	183	54
200-399 acres	20	324	221	7	379	241	2	229	201
400-999 acres	0	N/A	n/a	7	745	418	4	612	510
>1000	0	N/A	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	1	2210	n/a
OWNER/ OCCUPIERS	%	9	No.	%	24	No.	%	65	No.
>1-5	33	3	1	42	5	0.2	66	5	0.1
6-49 acres	33	23	15	27	11	11	18	45	6
50-199	22	151	1	23	151	61	11	183	63
200-399 acres	11	324	n/a	4	241	n/a	2	224	n/a
400-999 acres	0	0	0	4	431	n/a	3	552	531
>1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TENANT/ OCCUPIERS	%	12	No.	%	32	No.	%	199	No.
>1-5	33	1	0.4	44	6	0.1	66	6	0.01
6-49 acres	25	25	10	7	33	16	23	46	6
50-199	17	123	81	8	200	80	9	198	51
200-399 acres	25	260	221	3	353	236	2	283	206
400-999 acres	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	504	283
>1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 11.6b Landowners and Occupation Patterns — Kent Parishes

PARISH	BENENDEN			NEWENDEN			ROLVENDEN		
		Greatest Acreage	Least Acreage		Greatest Acreage	Least Acreage		Greatest Acreage	Least Acreage
LANDOWNERS	%	70	No.	%	22	No.	%	82	No.
>1-5	23	5	0.1	45	5	0.02	56	6	0.02
6-49 acres	40	54	8	32	33	9	17	44	6
50-199	33	185	56	18	127	96	20	174	54
200-399 acres	1	220	n/a	0	0	n/a	5	321	223
400-999 acres	1	493	n/a	5	411	n/a	1	956	n/a
>1000	1	2830	n/a	0	0	n/a	1	1335	n/a
OWNER/ OCCUPIERS	%	34	No.	%	7	No.	%	53	No.
>1-5	18	3	0.1	0.8	4	0.02	46	5	0.04
6-49 acres	50	29	4	15	33	9	30	6	44
50-199	29	90	54	0	0	0	22	190	50
200-399 acres	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	223	n/a
400-999 acres	3	440	n/a	84	411	n/a	n/a	0	0
>1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0
TENANT/ OCCUPIERS	%	99	No.	%	17	No.	%	78	No.
>1-5	29	7	0.1	44	5	0.1	53	1	0.03
6-49 acres	39	49	7	28	25	9	17	45	1
50-199	29	194	53	22	127	106	26	181	54
200-399 acres	2	244	220	0	0	0	4	291	212
400-999 acres	1	621	n/a	0	411	0	1	432	n/a
>1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

What is clear from the statistics is that within a broadly similar picture of tenure and ownership there are real differences between the parishes — some of which may stem from differences in tenurial history between the two counties — but all are directly related to the tenurial experience of the individual parishes. All of the parishes analysed here are in multiple ownership although there are considerable differences in the size of holdings possessed by the individual owners and the total amount of land that the different classes of landowners held. Benenden, Newenden and Salehurst each had one dominant landowner. At Newenden the major landowner has 40% of the total acreage for the parish, but this estate is less than 500 acres — an obvious reflection of the size of the parish, which at 1,044 acres is small by Wealden standards. The principle landowners in the other two parishes each held over one thousand acres, but the percentage of the total acreage that this represents varies from just over 44% (2,830 acres) in Benenden and 34% (2,210 acres) in Salehurst. What distinguishes the greater than a thousand acre estates is that they were composed of many holdings of varying acreages, mostly tenanted and with only woods and parkland generally kept in hand. In the two parishes of Bodiam and Etchingham large percentages of the parish acreage was in the hands of a number of superior owners. Bodiam (another small parish of 1,586 acres) had four principle owners with holdings ranging from about 220 acres to nearly 325 acres, representing 67% of parish acreage; in Etchingham there were six major landowners with holdings ranging from about 240 to 745 acres (representing 44% of parish acreage). Whilst for the most part these holdings were single farms, either owner-occupied or tenanted, in Etchingham the largest estate (745 acres) was subdivided into smaller farms

similar to the larger estates elsewhere. Rolvenden¹², where 50% of the parish's acreage was contained in two principle estates (one of 1,335, with one owner, and another of 1,439 acres in the hands of three joint owners), was unusual in having multiple superior property owners like the more open parishes but with tenurial structures typical of the 1,000+ acre estates in Benenden and Salehurst.

As can be seen from Tables 11.6a and b, owners in all parishes (excepting Newenden) with 200 acres or more held between them from 50% to 75% of each parish's total acreage, which in those parishes with estates of 1,000+ acres represents between 4.5% and 7% of ownership but in the more open parishes of Bodiam and Etchingham 20% and 14% of ownership respectively. It can also be seen that within the holdings category of 50 — 199 acres there was a wide difference in the number of owners in each parish and the size of the total acreage held by them. However, in most of the parishes this was an important group of landowners (allowing for the rather poor representation in Salehurst). Owners with less than 50 acres form the largest percentage of owners (ranging from 60% in Bodiam to 82% in Salehurst (where the figure is boosted by the township of Robertsbridge), but typically they have 10% or less of the parish acreage and (except in Benenden) the majority of these property owners have less than six acres. However, Newenden stands out as significantly different in both categories and this needs further explanation. In Newenden, exceptionally, only 40% of the parish acreage falls to those owning more than two hundred acres (4.5% of ownership) but for holdings between fifty and two hundred acres a

¹² In Rolvenden by 1842 the dominant landowning family was the Gibbon-Moneypennys. This family had a complex dynastic history the result of which was that at the time of the tithe survey a number of family members held different parts of both the Maytham and Hole Park estates.

further 42% of parish acreage is in the hands of four owners (18% of ownership), a higher ratio than average. The remaining 18% of parish acreage was in the hands of seventeen property owners (77.5% of ownership) a high ratio of ownership to acreage for this category. Thus, Newenden can be seen to have a more diverse land/property ownership pattern that sits somewhere between the relatively more closed parishes of Benenden and Salehurst, and the rather more open patterns in the parishes of Bodiam and Etchingham. However, the tithe survey statistics about ownership are just one element in the overall tenorial process of the time and to fully understand that it is necessary to look at other elements of the system, the size and distribution of holdings and their occupational patterns.

The spectrum of real estate ownership was a wide one that included at one extreme the humble cottage and garden and at the other estates of over two thousand acres, perhaps containing many cottages, homesteads and other facilities. Identifying these assets on the tithe map clearly indicates how they relate to settlement pattern and form. However, it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons without first establishing a clear idea of the size of individual holdings and how they were occupied. Within the tithe surveys, holdings of whatever size are normally identifiable because their occupiers are identified (although in some surveys many of the larger holdings are also named) and, therefore, both holdings and their occupiers are best considered together. The range of sizes for holdings was for all of these parishes extensive and complex, for which a scheme of categorisation is necessary in order to make sense of how these holdings were grouped and managed. Referring back to Table 11.4, which summarise the categories of holdings defined earlier in the chapter, it is possible to see the general trends

across the six parishes. These trends are comparable to the ones for ownership outlined above but a greater importance is attached to the number of smaller holdings because they were the building blocks for the larger estates. For example, in Benenden 63% of property owners in the lowest category of under fifty acres (that is, those whose whole property portfolio was in this category) held only 10% of the total parish acreage, whereas this size of holding made up 68% of the total number of holdings in the parish, representing 18.1% of the total parish acreage — demonstrating that such holdings were more important to the over all economy of the parish than the ownership statistics on their own might suggest. However, for the 50-200 acre category, where 33% of ownership controlled 35% of parish acreage, the total percentage of all occupied holdings in this category was 30%, representing 59% of total acreage; demonstrating the importance of this class of holding and the general principle that it is the middling range of holdings that dominate agricultural units of production. A full breakdown for each parish can be found in Charts 2.1-2.6 (Appendix F), which clearly demonstrates the contrast within ownership patterns where the greatest parish acreage is held by a minority of landowners; whereas in terms of occupied holdings the general trend is for the greater parish acreage to be distributed amongst holdings of between 50 and 300 acres. Interestingly, this trend is more marked in those parishes with large estates. This reinforces the notion that the larger estates did not usually redistribute their land holdings into larger (potentially) more efficient units, but preserved the distinctions between the different holdings that they had acquired over time.

Larger Landholdings and Farming Units

Once actual occupied holdings have been identified it is possible not only to locate them within the portfolios of individual owners but also describe the tenorial relationship between the occupier and the owner. Constructing this relationship is of particular importance in understanding how farms were managed and distributed. It is to those holdings of six acres and above that consideration is now given.

Farm sizes in the High Weald appear to have remained remarkably stable over long periods of time. For example, Gardiner has shown that there are probably instances where medieval holdings recorded in documents of the twelfth century have survived as identifiable holdings into modern times; the sizes of such farms vary, but they are typically of about thirty acres (Gardiner 1995, 94-98). This seems to be about the amount of land needed in the High Weald for a husbandman to consider calling himself a yeoman (Zell 2000, 69-72). But this is not to suggest that the sizes of farms generally remained unchanged from medieval times and research on the Kent side demonstrates that farm sizes in the Kentish Weald grew between the 1560s and the 1620s (Zell 2000, 45)¹³. If Zell is right, this seems to have been the period of growth for Wealden farms and Chalklin was probably accurate in claiming that farms in predominantly pastoral areas did not increase in size after an early (in national terms) growth in Wealden farm size during the sixteenth century (Chalklin 1965, 58).

¹³ The median size of Wealden farms in Zell's sample were still small at 43 acres in 1620 (even smaller at 24 acres in the 1560's-70's) compared to the 77 acres in the fertile lands of East Kent or the 130 acres in Romney Marsh. Comparisons with Benenden in 1840 where the median size of holdings was 45 acres supports this stability, but shows Rolvenden to have been a parish of much larger farms with a median of 63 acres (the size of Zell's farms in the Scarplands of Kent in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries). However, all the evidence points to the fact that Rolvenden holdings were larger in the seventeenth century also.

Many Kentish farms that became the object of a farm plan in the early seventeenth century demonstrate a remarkable stability in terms of their size and structure when compared with later maps of the nineteenth century — just the period over which in many other areas of the country farm sizes were changing under the banner of improvement (Chester-Kadwell 2004, 45-49). Plans of estate and farm holdings, although only representing a sample of all holdings, show remarkable stability in farm boundaries throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. For example, a second survey of Hemsted lands in Rolvenden compiled from Hodskinson's original survey in 1779 (CKS U78 P36) shows three blocks of land owned by the estate, at Kensham Green (Kensham Farm), West Maitham (Hexton Marshes) and East Maitham (Maytham Marshes). Except for a couple of fields at Hexton Marshes all three holdings remained much the same in 1838. The same continuity in the extent of holdings may be witnessed at other locations for which plans still exist. For example, at Iden Farm, Rolvenden, 1755 (CKS U409 P17); The Gatehouse and Buckland, Rolvenden, 1750 (CKS U409 P16); Pookwell and Crabham, Rolvenden 1797 (CKS U86 P19); Sarnden, Benenden 1807 (CKS U280 P2); Ramsden & Burnthouse, Benenden 1747 (CKS U1463 P1); Sheaf Farm, Rolvenden 1743 (CKS U749 P2). Paper Mill and Brokes Wood (both in Benenden) appear in estate plans dating back to 1640-1650 as separate holdings only slightly less in extent than they appear in 1840 (CKS U1506 P1-45). The majority of these plans are elements in larger portfolios of land and may not, therefore, be representative of all holdings. Others, the ones belonging to the smaller, independent landowner may have been more prone to amalgamation over this same period. However, there were still sufficient small and middling survivors by the late 1830s in both parishes to suggest that they could still hold their own.

The situation in the Sussex parishes was not radically different (but the effect of the stronger manorial system may have acted as an additional stabilising factor in conserving medieval farm sizes, although there is also evidence that farms were being re-sized during the course of the sixteenth century in Sussex as in Kent). The holdings recorded in the Etchingham manorial survey of 1597 generally shows that most farming units found in the tithe survey also existed at that time with similar recorded acreages (Sylvanus 1953). There are a considerable number of farms subject to local surveys in Sussex parishes from the seventeenth through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries — consequently an appreciable area of parish land is subject to early plans. Farm and estate plans for the Sussex parishes also demonstrate similar continuity to those in Kent.

It may be that the sizes of farms recorded in the tithe surveys represent a range of optimum sizes for the local agrarian economy of the post-medieval High Weald. All agricultural holdings of six acres and above in the tithe surveys of the six parishes have been analysed, and their basic statistics can be found in Tables 11.4 (see also Chart 3.1-3.6, Appendix F). These show the same general trends found in the analysis of the total number of holdings discussed above, as might be expected, but with a minor adjustment made in the percentage acreage because of the reduced total of acres after those holdings under six acres have been excluded. It is, however, worth reiterating the high percentage of the total acreage in five out of the six parishes for farms between 50 and 200 acres. In general in those parishes with well organised estate cultures, farms under 50 acres tend to take up a higher percentage of the parish acreage (and in the case of Salehurst much higher) than the more open parishes of Bodiam and Etchingham. The percentage total acreage for farms above 200 acres varies more widely

between the parishes, presumably because the creation or loss of a single farm of this size will have a proportionately greater effect on the total.

Many farms within the six parishes were owned as single units, but many more were units in larger estates. That those farms that were individually owned units should continue to survive over long periods is not necessarily surprising, but it is clear that estates seem also to have preserved farms more or less in the form in which they were acquired — for some reason estate managers were either reluctant to interfere with these traditional farm units or found it practically difficult to merge them. Part of the explanation for this might be found in the need to keep the identity of land units clearly defined to ensure proof of title; in other words, what is recorded in the surveys and other land books is a description of the farm according to its original deeds rather than how it is actually being managed. Another plausible explanation may lie in the piecemeal acquisition of farms, which in the Weald were let out on a typical seven-year lease (Brandon 2003, 64). The date of acquisition would determine when a particular lease expired, with the likelihood that the termination date of leases in a single estate would not often coincide. Therefore, the opportunity to amalgamate farms, without taking the extreme measure of an early termination of a number of leases would be restricted. Other methods of increasing efficiency without formal amalgamation could be adopted. Favoured tenants could be given the opportunity to occupy more than one farm at any given time: for example, on the Law Hodges estate at Hemsted, Thomas Neve was leased a number of farms in Benenden totalling over six hundred acres for a long period (CCA:DCb/To/B6A&B; CKS: U78). This practice allowed estate managers to benefit from leasing their land to able tenants and capitalise on the economy of scale by these temporary amalgamations,

but at the same time allow for maximum flexibility if circumstances should change (Joscelyn 1801 [CKS I20/28/2]). Elsewhere, perhaps more surprisingly, some farms were subdivided between tenants and on the Iridge Estate, in Salehurst, multiple tenancies and the substitution of fields between farms were eroding traditional farm boundaries (ESRO: TD/E86). However, in all of these cases the original farm unit did not lose its identity and original integrity in the land books.

The main divisions of farmlands as they appear in the tithe surveys for the six parishes are illustrated in Plans 4.1-6.1 (see Appendix F). Some whole farms are occupied as single units — either by owner occupiers or tenant occupiers, others have elements occupied by the owner (typically woodland or a country house and garden) with the bulk of the agricultural lands in the hands of tenants, others still are subdivided between a number of tenants.

The dynamic element of tenure can best be appreciated by examining the way in which patterns of occupation were built up between owners and occupiers. The fundamental distinction in terms of occupation is, quite obviously, between owner-occupiers and tenant occupiers — although the two classes were not mutually exclusive and many occupiers were both owners in their own right and tenants to other owners. In all six parishes there were more tenant-occupiers than owner-occupiers, but the ratio of one to the other varied between the more open and more closed parishes. Thus, in Benenden, Newenden, and Salehurst (all parishes with one superior owner) the mean average ratio of owner-occupiers to tenant-occupiers for holdings above six acres was 1:2.15¹⁴; whilst in Bodiam,

¹⁴ Newenden has a ratio of 1:2.25, which accords with that of Benenden and Salehurst — however it is a parish of land holdings that are either owner-occupied or single tenancies.

Rolvenden, and Etchingham (where there was multiple superior owners) the average mean ratio was 1:1.25. This does seem to be a meaningful difference reinforcing the earlier observation that the larger estates promoted tenancies over owner-occupation, but it also illustrates that the occupational patterns within parishes had similar profiles either side of the county boundary.

Continuity and Change in Parish Morphology

The aim of the benchmarking process is to allow a picture to be built of change and continuity over time on the firm basis of the benchmarked data, in this case that of the tithe surveys. What follows is a parish-by-parish analysis of this data. The picture that emerges suggests that tenure in its broadest sense in the six parishes was primarily a reflection of historical experience in each individual parish from the early Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. Because of the connection between tenorial structures and settlement pattern explored earlier, it is probably true to say that the settlement morphology represented on the tithe maps is of some antiquity.

The following interpretation is based upon a detailed analysis of the tenorial relationship between owners, occupiers and the size of holding in the tithe surveys (see Appendix F) in the context of the earlier evidence raised here and in Chapter 10 (see also Appendices D and E). Key information is contained in Table 11.6a and 6b, which gives a summary of tenorial occupation with an indication of the range of holdings size.

Benenden

Nearly 45% of the parish acreage of Benenden in the tithe survey lay within the Hemsted Estate (Plan 4.1, Appendix F). This estate included the medieval manor of Hemsted, the manor of Benenden (one of the few High

Weald manors mentioned in Domesday (Morgan 1983, 5:180)¹⁵ and sundry other holdings mainly in Benenden but also in neighbouring parishes. An overview of the Hemsted Estate in 1848 can be found in a mortgage document dated 14th December 1849, which gives a description of each of its component holdings together with an indication as to how the estate acquired them¹⁶. It is clear from this that much of the estate was built up in the post medieval period and although dates are not always given it is known that it refers to land transactions occurring at least back to the seventeenth century (CKS: U409/T38)¹⁷. The implication is that this large High Weald estate was a post medieval creation based on much smaller medieval manors. The consolidation of larger estates, such as that of Hemsted, became possible during the early modern period because of the flexible land market in the county. Whilst the Hemsted Estate had 37 tenants with only 440 acres in hand, most of the other landholdings in the parish were predominantly single units either owner-occupied or tenant-occupied, only some of the latter made provision for the owner to live on site or occupy specific assets such as woodland. However, there were also a few additional owners who had multi-tenancies, these included corporate owners such as the Benenden Free School or the Canterbury Cathedral Dean & Chapter. The latter is of particular interest as the land that they owned was, by the time of the tithe survey, divided into tenancies that averaged out to seventeen acres each (with a range of 21 to 11.5 acres). However, in the parish survey of 1777, this land was tenanted in larger

¹⁵ Latterly the manor house lay on the western edge of Benenden green and the Den of Benenden, which was in the Hundred of Rolvenden.

¹⁶ This document is currently in the possession of Dr Pollard of Benenden. I am grateful to him for a transcription and additional notes.

¹⁷ This is a marriage settlement made by Thomas Kadwell in favour of his second wife, Sarah Evernden in 1680, which refers to the acquisition of certain lands earlier in the century that is also recorded in the Hemsted mortgage deed, but without a specific date.

parcels so that it appears that the Dean & Chapter may well have taken the decision earlier in the century (arguably as a result of the post Napoleonic downturn in agriculture) to create small holding opportunities for local farmers. Others with multiple tenancies include Sarah Cleveland with 185 acres (of which about 177 acres was leased to five tenants) and Thomas Gybbon Monypenny with 490 acres, being an outlier of his Hole Park Estate, and leased to six tenants (the 71 acres of Manor Barn Farm being held in hand).

In essence, tenure in Benenden, although having its origins in medieval landholding systems, was the result of the redistribution of land in the early modern period. The units of landholding (that is to say the actual size and limits of individual farm units) appear to be quite old even in 1840, and it is probable that many could be traced back to the medieval period. Farms were acquired and formed the building blocks of estates or the residual elements of family holdings, often being locked into a system of middle class land banks for generations. What typified the larger Benenden estates was the maintenance of many tenancies over a very wide range of farm sizes, and the lack of a comprehensive re-organisation of farm units to take advantage of the scale of size — even when, as in the case of Mr Neve, one man was entrusted with leasing over 600 acres.

Rolvenden

The tenurial background for this parish is similar to that of Benenden in the sense that it originated in a manorial system whose independence from the larger Kentish manors to the north and east only slowly emerged in the later Middle Ages (see Chapter 10). An early manor to gain its independence was Halden Place, which under some high profile owners became quite powerful and was for a time in common ownership with

Hemsted (Hasted 1793, vol. 7, 185). Others such as Frensham, Lowden and Kensham were small and by the seventeenth century had really ceased to operate effectively as manors; in the case of Frensham and Kensham even their demesne lands were divided. As at Benenden, the redistributive effects of Gavelkind and the intervention of industrial capital favoured the creation of large estates in the early modern period. At Rolvenden three estates of a 1000 acres or more emerged during the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries — of which two survived intact into the nineteenth century whilst the third subsisted in three portions. As with other High Wealden estates, the Rolvenden estates were composed of a significant number of holdings of varying sizes accrued over a period of time. These were mainly tenanted with only the woods and ornamental parkland being held in hand by the estate (Chester-Kadwell 2004, 33-37; 59-64). In the early eighteenth century a miniature estate had been established by John Weller, which consisted of three small farms, in total comprising 134 acres. Besides the Rolvenden based estates there were also a number of outliers from estates in neighbouring parishes, such as that of Law Hodges and the Earl Cornwallis. Estate based lands in Rolvenden accounted for about 70% of the parish acreage, although no one estate accounted for more than 23% (compared to the 45% in Benenden and the 34% in Salehurst). Of the remaining acreage much was in the hands of established independent owner-occupier farmers, which was also an important facet of tenure in this parish. It might also be mentioned that, as in Benenden, the 80 acres owned by the ecclesiastic proprietor (in Rolvenden the Dean and Chapter of Rochester) was subdivided into smallholdings at the time of the tithe survey.

Bodiam

In 1086 Bodiam was a sub-manor of Ewhurst but later became independent with its own chapel (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 262-264). At some unspecified date an ecclesiastical parish was created based on the manorial estate — hence its rather small size for a Wealden parish¹⁸. The manor included all the land in the parish, excepting some water meadows that had been granted to Battle Abbey sometime towards the end of the eleventh century (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 262). The manor was largely held in demesne until the sixteenth century, when it was divided through inheritance and the demesne estate eventually became distributed between a numbers of owners (Curzon 1926, 22-48). A plan of the manor of Bodiam dated 1671 records where the sale of demesne land had occurred as well as that land still held by the lord of the manor (ESCRO: AMS 5691-3-1). As a result Bodiam became divided into a number of farms, some of which reflect the original sixteenth century division of the demesne — such as Courtlodge Farm (260 acres), Northlands Farm (259 acres), Park Farm (323 acres) and perhaps Knowle Hill Farm (220 acres). The history of land division and inheritance is known to be complex, so that the details are elusive, but the end result was to produce a number of good-sized farms rather than one dominant estate (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 263-264). At the time of the tithe survey, some of these farms were owner-occupied, others tenanted, but none had been subdivided further, and the number of holdings in the parish remained comparatively few. The tenurial structure in Bodiam parish was the result of the decay of the post-Domesday manor and the redistribution of its demesne and this produced a distinctive pattern of dispersed settlement.

¹⁸ However, this is comparable with post-Conquest parochial creations in other parts of the country, for example in Huntingdonshire. See chapter 6.

Etchingham¹⁹

Etchingham is not actually mentioned in Domesday by name, but the extensive landholdings of Reinbert, the Sheriff of Hastings, are recorded (Morris (ed.) 1976, see entries for Shoyswell & Henhurst hundreds). It was Reinbert who founded the dynasty that was later to take its name from the Etchingham estate (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 212), thus creating a baronial phenomenon that Domesday could only hint at. The land held by the de Etchingham heirs in both hundreds formed the Lordship of Etchingham (held of the Count of Eu), which comprised the demesne manor of Etchingham itself and a number of sub-manors — freehold manors of the lordship (Martin 1988). In 1166 the Lordship was assessed at seven fees and by 1326 this was reckoned at five and three quarter fees (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 212-213). At some date unknown a church was established within Etchingham, which is recorded in the *Taxatio* of 1291 as being at Burgham (Rushton 1999, 136 & 152), a freehold tenement of the manor of Etchingham; this would have been a chapel in the parish of Salehurst. In about 1363 Sir William de Etchingham built a new church on his demesne land at Etchingham (Saul 1986, 140-141). A new ecclesiastical parish was thus formed, which included all the demesne lands, those of the sub-manors of the lordship, as well as the detached manor of Glottenham — an outlier in the parish of Mountfield (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 213)²⁰. Until the foundation of a separate church at Etchingham, that at Salehurst would have served the whole of Henhurst hundred, as the church at Hazelhurst (now Ticehurst) would have served Shoyswell (Morris (ed.) 1976, 9:60,

¹⁹ This study analyses both Etchingham and Salehurst on their original, pre-1954 boundaries, prior to the creation of Hurst Green Civil Parish.

²⁰ Part of the ecclesiastical parish was lost to Hurst Green when it was also made an ecclesiastical parish in 1907 (Salzman 1973, 212).

9:82). Thus, the founding of Etchingham as a separate parish changed the relationship between parish and hundred in this area.

The sub-manors of the Barony of Etchingham had by the modern period become farmsteads (although substantial ones) in the hands of different owners, some owner-occupied but mainly tenanted. The demesne estate of Etchingham was sold off in lots in 1802 (Martin 1988), just thirty-five years before the tithe survey. This accounts for the pattern of tenure in Etchingham Parish in 1837, where the tenorial landscape is dominated by a considerable number of largish farms — ironically transforming what was once a very ‘closed’ and tightly controlled medieval parish into one of the more ‘open’ ones by the nineteenth century.

In many respects what happened post-Conquest at Etchingham mirrored what also occurred at Bodiam and the effect on the tenorial pattern at the time of the tithe survey was similar. At Etchingham there is the same proliferation of substantial farms either owner-occupied or tenanted, normally without sub-division although a portion was sometimes reserved for the personal use of the landowner. The major exceptions to this occurred on the 745-acre estate of the Reverend Richard Wetherell, which contained five major farms, all but one tenanted — a typical estate management strategy. It is worth remembering that if the tithe survey had taken place 40 years earlier it would have recorded the ancient manorial estate of the lordship of Etchingham and the tenorial pattern of the parish would have appeared quite different.

Salehurst

Domesday records two townships under Henhurst hundred within what would later be recognised as the parish of Salehurst — Salehurst itself

(where the Domesday church was situated) and Drigsell (Morris (ed.) 1976, 9:82 & 83). Drigsell was the larger of the two townships, but was subsequently absorbed into the estate of Robertsbridge Abbey (Gardiner, Jones, & Martin 1991, 81-82). By the thirteenth century there were three broad manorial divisions within the parish, namely Salehurst (held by the de Etchingham family together with the Lordship of Etchingham), Robertsbridge (the Abbey estate named after the town of Robertsbridge founded in the twelfth century), and Wigsell held directly from the Count of Eu (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 220-222). At the Dissolution the manor of Robertsbridge was granted the Earl of Leicester (1539) with whom it stayed until it was conveyed to Sir Thomas Webster in 1728 (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 221). Subsequently, it descended with the Battle Abbey estate, but was sold off in 1817 to several owners with the largest portion going to Edward Alfrey (ESRO: BAT 4435/15-19). Land on the west of the parish, for example Bugsell, became closely associated with the Etchingham estate whilst other elements of the manor of Salehurst became established as separate farms from at least the fifteenth century onwards (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 220). In the fourteenth century Iridge, at Hurst Green, was in the possession of the Braban family and by the middle of the sixteenth it was a manor in its own right and was conveyed in 1560 to John Wildegos and his heirs (Salzmann (ed.) 1973, 220). During the early modern period the Iridge estate was built up from its manorial base absorbing over time many of the smaller independent farms particularly in the central part of the parish in a process very similar to that described for the Hemsted estate above.

At the time of the tithe survey the Iridge estate with 2,210 acres comprised a third of the parish — with another third in the hands of a further four estates of 500-600 acres composed of two farms or more each,

mostly tenanted. Thus Salehurst was a parish largely in the hands of estate owners, although there were a number of smaller farms between 50 and 200 acres — some owner-occupied, others tenanted. The Iridge estate was remarkable because an extensive part of it was parcelled up into quite small tenancies and although many of these were small farms of some long standing others were later sub-divisions of larger farms. Consequently, many of these smaller tenancies did not have homesteads situated on them and were often farmed by men living in the villages and hamlets in the parish. Over all, Salehurst had the most complex tenorial pattern of all the parishes with different strata of ownership and occupation — comprising one large estate with multiple small tenancies, a number of other superior owners, as well as some large independent farms. The hamlet at Northbridge Street, the country town of Robertsbridge, and the part of the hamlet of Hurst Green situated in the parish provided a large number of smaller holdings from which many tradesmen also operated.

Newenden

At the time of Domesday, Newenden was held in demesne by the Archbishop of Canterbury and was important enough to have its own market (Morgan (ed.) 1983, 2:27). Despite the fact that Newenden was assessed at only one sulung it had 25 villagers and four small holders (compare with Drigsell in the Sussex hundred of Henhurst, which was assessed at three and a half hides and one virgate, having 18 villagers and six smallholders). Situated at the confluence of the Rother and the Hexden Channel it was at the gateway of the eastern High Weald, which no doubt accounted for its importance. By 1700, however, it was much diminished, to the extent that a large part of the church was demolished as the community could not keep up its maintenance (Hasted 1793, vol. vii, 171). By the time

of the tithe survey Lossenham manor, with over 400 acres, accounted for 40% of the parish and was farmed as one unit — the next largest farm was a tenancy of 127 acres. Despite the fact that the township was now little more than the size of a hamlet there was still a cadre of Commoners holding 33 acres, an unusual survival in this part of the Weald. A large percentage of the parish was marshland, which was held in small parcels by a number of neighbouring estates such as Hemsted in Benenden, Maytham in Rolvenden, Wigsell and Iridge in Salehurst.

COMMENTARY

The topographical structure of the eastern High Weald possesses a physiological complexity that, never the less, presents as a visually coherent landscape and its dispersed settlement pattern nestles comfortably within it. On closer inspection, however, there are differences in the lie of the land across the study area as well as in the disposition of settlement features. This is partly because of the very variable geology of the Hastings beds, but particularly as a result of differences in elevation and inclination of the landscape within the complex drainage pattern of the river Rother and its tributaries. Together these factors contribute to the visual perspective of the landscape, especially the openness of the view. Consequently, each parish has a character that differs to a greater or lesser extent from its neighbour and which, together with the variations of soil type and fertility, has influenced land management elements such as field sizes, the degree of woodland cover, and the siting of habitation. Many of these aspects, particularly field type and field sizes, are discussed in the following chapter, but as the disposition of habitation over the area is also partly a reflection of the tenurial structure of the component parishes it is relevant to consider its impact here.

Effects of Tenure on Settlement Patterns

There are two aspects that thread their way through the tenurial analysis of the six parishes, both of which may have an impact on the landscape even today. The first is whether there was one dominant landowner or a multiple of superior owners within any particular parish, and the second was whether land holdings for any one owner was above or below about a thousand acres. It was how these factors manifest themselves in a parish that largely determined settlement distribution within it because whereas larger holdings less than a thousand acres were rarely subdivided, the greater estates (those over a 1000 acres) were normally sub-divided into much smaller units — in short, parishes with great estates had more farmsteads (homesteads) per acre. This is rather a crude measure and not entirely reliable as many of the smaller tenancies did not come with a farmstead *in situ*, but in general terms some parishes did have more farmsteads in the landscape than others.

Close inspection of farmstead distribution in each of the parishes demonstrates the differences in the density of dispersal. The visual impact of these differences in the density of farmsteads depended to some degree on topography. For example, in areas with greater farmstead density (such as in the southern part of Benenden) the terrain tends to be more steeply contoured and views shortened, presenting a closely grained landscape that can mask the visual impact of homestead density. However it is also noticeable that topography influences where farmsteads are located geographically: for example, on the tithe map only one farmstead²¹ is found below the 5-metre contour and few are situated below the 10-metre mark.

²¹ This is on land at Newenden following reclamation of the marshland post 1630. The present farmhouse is eighteenth-century.

Few new farms have been added since the tithe surveys so that farmstead distribution has not radically changed.

In the High Weald, therefore, farm size seems to have been related to settlement pattern in one of two ways. Larger farms, with their homesteads set within their own fields, produced a more dispersed pattern, whilst the smallest land holdings were usually associated with homesteads within the existing hamlets. This suggests that smaller tenancies tended to support nucleation, as indeed did the growth of trade and tradesmen in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus there is a link between tenurial structures and settlement morphology because, although tenure of itself does not create the settlement pattern, different tenurial regimes seem to influence it. The capacity to discern these subtle variations, so important to the management of development in individual places, illustrates the difference between locally orientated studies and more generalised ones. For example, Roberts and Wrathmell who treat the Weald in a very general way (they do not distinguish between the Low and High Weald) did not pick up these important, but local, variations (Roberts & Wrathmell 2002, 161). Finally, if tenure has influenced settlement pattern in the past, it must be considered as a mechanism for determining the distribution, and possibly also the form, of settlement in the future. This is an important conclusion for consideration by those responsible today for maintaining the character of the High Weald.

Continuity of Settlement Pattern and Form, Eleventh to the Nineteenth Century

A key issue is how far the medieval settlement pattern was preserved in the landscape at the time of the tithe surveys and remains within the present day landscape. This is difficult to know in detail with certainty, but

there are a number of factors that indicate an identifiable continuity. The first indication of continuity is to be found in place name evidence. A large number of settlement names (and farmsteads in particular) can be traced back to medieval documents including a few to Saxon charter material (see Chapter 10). Thus many places at the present day appear to have names that already existed by the thirteenth century or slightly later. Secondly, there appear to be some surviving land holdings that researchers, such as Gardiner and Martin, have positively identified with medieval ones, and there may be many more that have not yet been identified. Even if a direct link between them is not always forthcoming, the pattern of smaller landholdings that flourish in the High Weald today, seem to accurately reflect an early pattern as well. Thirdly, there is the occurrence of greens and associated routeways that reflect the survival of medieval landscape features and are a significant part of the contemporary landscape character. Where these have changed over time and where it is possible to track those changes evidence is available for how settlement form has developed since the Middle Ages.

The distribution and development of hamlets and villages (where these exist) were also affected by earlier patterns of land tenure and have undergone radical change over time. This is not totally a recent phenomenon and one that has demonstrable differences each side of the county boundary. In Kent in the early nineteenth century habitation on the site of greens was in the process of increasing at the expense of the remaining commons (for example, Iden Green; Benenden Green; Layne Green in Rolvenden). On the Sussex side whilst hamlets were sometimes created out of the roadside waste (for example, Etchingham) as well as at ancient green sites (for example, Hurst Green) there were also some villages,

such as Salehurst, as well as planned towns like Robertsbridge. An interesting issue is whether there were any true hamlets in the High Weald before the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. This is difficult to know with any certainty, and it may well be that this particular morphological type is comparatively late. Earlier medieval hamlets may have existed, but shrunk after the Black Death, only to return at a later date. Considering that recent development on both sides of the county boundary has tended to allow expansion within hamlet sites, the question of whether this is in keeping with an otherwise very dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and isolated homesteads has significance, even though planners seem ready to allow that these are suitable sites for further development.

In the High Weald parishes, such as Bodiam and Etchingham, that were later foundations based on the manorial holdings of a single lord there is a similarity with parishes in the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley that had comparable origins; but whilst in the smaller Huntingdonshire parishes the majority of the land was still typically vested in a single owner in the early nineteenth century, in the Weald there was more likely to be a small coterie of owners descended from one dominant manorial antecedent. Larger Huntingdonshire parishes (for example, Eynesbury) often had more than one major landowner, similar to their Wealden counterparts; but the larger Wealden estates were the result of post-medieval land redistribution resulting from market forces, whereas in Huntingdonshire many of the great estates were based on grants of land previously held by large monastic houses. In the Weald, although the great estates possessed high percentages of their parish acreage they did not completely take over, and there remained scope for smaller farmers to survive and for middle rank landowners to maintain their independence over the period.

In Sussex a more clearly defined and better-organised manorial system in the medieval period had devolved into larger farms by the nineteenth century, in contrast to a rather weaker manorial structure in Kent that was much more vulnerable to redistribution in the early modern period and which led to large estate formation. What this amounts to is that in the Sussex parishes the more coherent manorial estates tended to survive into the early modern period and later, but that when eventually they did break down it was into relatively large farms. In Kent, the weaker manorial holdings of the Middle Ages were redistributed in the early modern period under its more liberal land market, the result of which was to build up new estates. At the same time there were exceptions to this general trend: for example, Newenden had a more structured manorial base, whilst in Salehurst the Iridge estate had more in common with some of the Kentish estates. However, each parish had a somewhat unique pattern of tenure, making generalisation of uncertain usefulness. Everitt summarised this well when he wrote that the large parishes of the High Weald were rarely in “few hands” and more commonly “much divided” (Everitt 1972, 86-88).

In conclusion it may be surmised that the settlement pattern in this part of the High Weald had not radically changed between the Middle Ages and the nineteenth century, although the differences in form between villages, hamlets and individual farmsteads have become more distinct over time. The continuity in settlement form, itself, is more difficult to establish and much of what is seen today is post medieval. For example, although the survival rates of medieval timber framed houses built for the better off is higher in the Weald than elsewhere, that for the houses for less exalted folk is not (Pearson 1994, 146-147). Thus, although there are a significant number of farmhouses that survive from the thirteenth to sixteenth

centuries, the earliest extant houses built for the less wealthy tend to date from the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries (East Sussex and Kent HERs). Landmark buildings from the Middle Ages, such as parish churches and timber framed Wealden houses, might suggest a higher degree of continuity between the form of medieval settlement and that of the nineteenth century that other evidence would support. Recent research into routeways in the High Weald suggests that they also have changed and developed over time, and although many are very ancient, new ones are being formed and some existing ones extinguished continuously²². This suggests that much of the settlement form we see in the current landscape (as on the tithe maps) is post Early Modern, even though based on a medieval settlement pattern.

Land Use Patterns in the High Weald

Whilst the issue of land use has not been specifically dealt with in this analysis — the detail of this important topic is beyond the scope of this study — the suitability of contemporary agricultural land use patterns is acknowledged as of concern to local planning authorities. Planning and conservation officers frequently deal with applications for changes of use in historically sensitive areas, and therefore the subject warrants some mention here. One of the key factors is the perception that the High Weald, which is now predominantly a pastoral landscape, has always been so. This now seems doubtful as a generalisation from the evidence of the tithe surveys. Benenden (which, like Rolvenden, did not record the state of cultivation in detail) had at the time of the tithe survey in 1840 more arable than pasture, but in the parish survey of 1777 the situation was reversed (CKS P20/27/1; CKS U49/C13/37). Benenden was unusual because all the other parishes

²² Early results from a current research project on High Weald routeways, by the High Weald Unit and the University of East Anglia, report due 2011.

except Newenden had roughly equal measures of both. Newenden had more pasture than arable, largely because of its highly valued marshland pastures. Therefore most parishes were areas of mixed farming (Plans 7.1-7.4, Appendix F). Although, on its own, this is not sufficient evidence for what might have happened earlier, it is indicative of the area's ability to move from one form of agriculture to another over time.

Conclusion

The tithe surveys and the parish plans that accompany them are witness to only one stage in the development of settlement morphology in the High Weald. It needs to be born in mind, therefore, that the comprehensiveness of the surveys may have given them a greater significance than they deserve. That is, there is a danger that the quality of the evidence makes the settlement pattern that they record look like the *norm* for Wealden settlement, not just a useful *benchmark*. The availability of the tithe survey material, now that it has been digitalised²³, adds to this possibility and indeed there is evidence that this is happening²⁴. However, on a more positive note, they remain an effective benchmark and an unrivalled point of reference for the analysis of the contemporary landscape and the current settlement pattern.

The analysis in this chapter has explored, through the medium of the parish tithe surveys, issues that relate to a morphogenesis of continuity. An objective has been to assist local communities, planners, and others looking to the future development of settlements in the High Weald to better understand the landscape and the settlement morphology it contains. Those

²³ The tithe maps by the Kent and East Sussex record offices, the apportionments by the Kent Archaeological Society and the East Sussex Record Offices.

²⁴ The tithe surveys have become the base line historic material for the High Weald Unit.

who believe that modern additions to the settlement pattern are merely another layer of history should note the immense continuity in settlement forms and distribution exhibited in both study areas. In the High Weald, any deviations from the historical forms amount to a break with that continuity established over a long period of time. How this knowledge helps us to come to a better understanding about the character of the historic environment is addressed more fully in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 12: SIX WEALDEN PARISHES — DIVINING THE ESSENCE OF THEIR RURAL SETTLEMENT

“...and from the tops of the adjacent hills, it is the finest prospect imaginable, to look down into the Weald in summer-time; for the whole being in a manner composed of inclosures, the cornfields and meadows of different colours, adorned with all manner of flowers, the green woods and hedge-rows, and the towns and villages here and there interspersed, do afford so very great and agreeable a variety of view, that I never saw any thing where more delightful and charming.”...¹

¹ The Beauties of England and Wales; or, original delineations, topographical, historical, and descriptive, and literary delineations in Kent, by Edward Wedlake Brayley, Vol VIII, London, 1808.

INTRODUCTION

The High Weald has been characterised by generations of observers as a well-wooded countryside of hamlets, farmsteads set within their fields, but with few true villages of the kind found elsewhere — (Harris 2003; Brandon 2003; and Short 2006); similarly, a recent study based on nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey maps looking specifically at settlement dispersal has produced a comparable interpretation of settlement distribution (Roberts and Wrathmell, 2000; 2002). However, these analyses do not fully take account of the gradual erosion of this traditional settlement pattern since the nineteenth century, and although the rate of change has been slow analysis of the present day settlement pattern arguably shows a much more nucleated pattern than hitherto. Since the designation of the High Weald as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the management of future development has been subjected to a more rigorous examination, based upon an understanding of the history of the High Weald, but without necessarily acknowledging more recent changes to settlement morphology. This chapter explores current settlement patterns, both referring back to their historic origins and to the continued development they have experienced.

Whilst there are general trends within the patterns of settlement distribution and density that can be identified in the High Weald, there are also many exceptions and irregularities. This makes sweeping generalisations about historic settlement patterns unreliable as a basis for local development decisions and, despite the seductiveness of this approach, it is not the intention to offer the kind of historic landscape characterisation described earlier in this thesis. However, the analysis does recognise the

usefulness of these general trends — and none more so than those that arise from the geological and physiological form of the Wealden landscape.

Although the parish has been adopted as the unit for analysis, the Wealden hundreds also need to be considered in terms of the socio-economic development of the communities that inhabit the settlements described here (perhaps because their intimate scale made them a more useful focus for local governance than is found elsewhere, for example in Huntingdonshire). This is particularly so on the Kent side of the county boundary where the hundred can bear an interesting association with the local topography and survived as a meaningful administrative unit for a longer period than in Sussex — this has been already discussed in previous sections of Chapter 10.

NARRATIVE

Analysis of Contemporary Settlement Patterns

Background Discussion

The methodology for contemporary settlement analysis is based upon a comparison of current settlement with earlier evidence. The objective is to understand the current distribution and density of habitation and associated features in the context of their historical significance. The tithe award maps form an historical datum line because of the level of detail and the consistency of their coverage. Earlier parish surveys, the occasional historic maps covering a larger area than the single parish, and the extensive (but incomplete) series of estate and farm plans for all six parishes covered in the study support an interpretation of the tithe survey material. The map sources used for this analysis are good for gauging the distribution and density of settlement as well as other associated spatial features, but these

flat images do not convey well the realities of such a dynamic topography. This deficiency was to some extent overcome with the publication of the first Ordnance Survey maps because surface relief was included consistently for the first time. The series of Ordnance Survey maps available for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries not only show the settlement pattern and form at any single period but also, in series, indicate change over time.

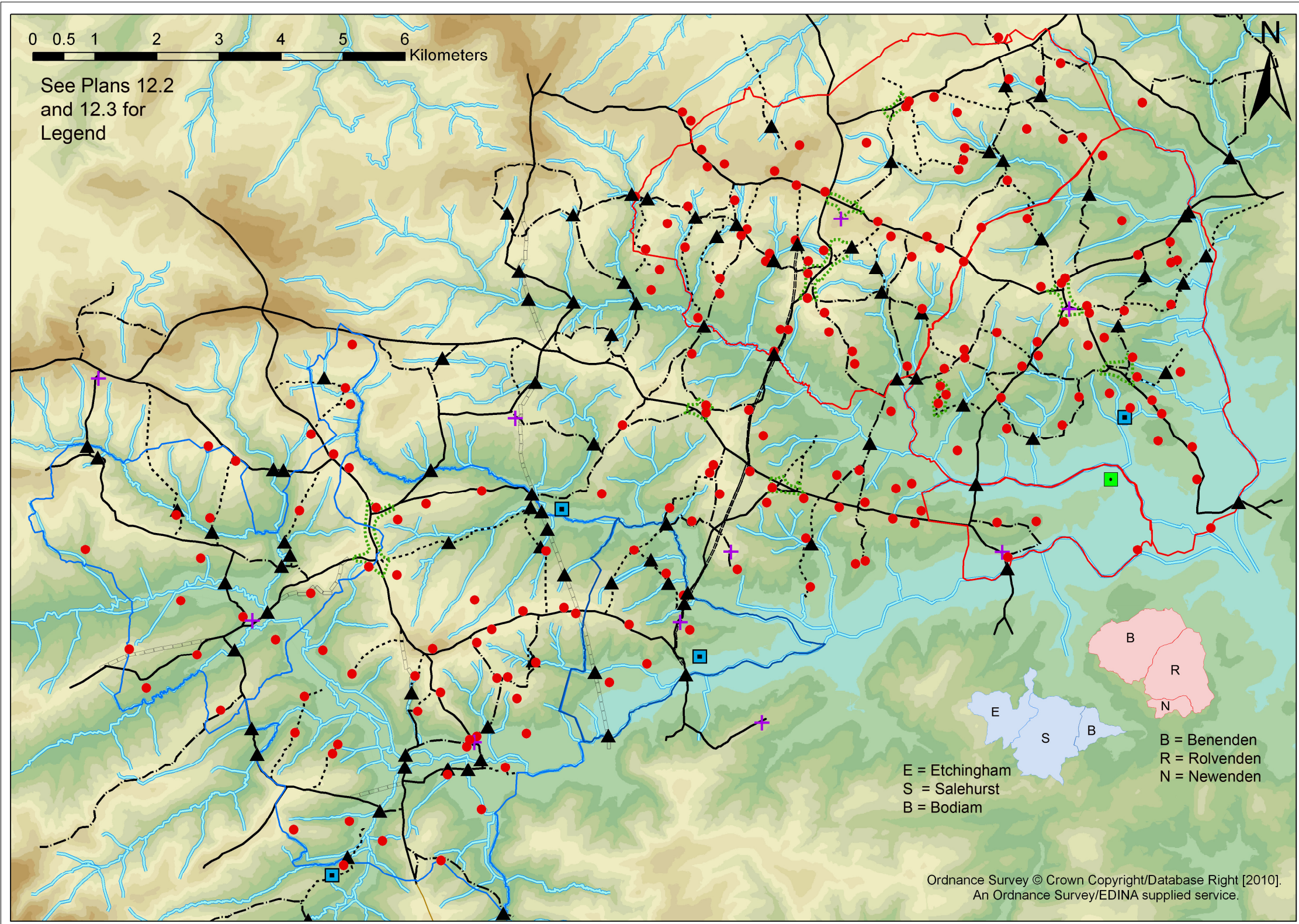
It is difficult to fully comprehend Wealden settlement morphology without exploring how it is influenced by the topography of the landscape within which it lies. It would be surprising, therefore, if many studies fail to make use of relief maps in helping to explain the location and relationship of settlement in areas where the nature of the topography is so critical; although in some very recent analysis this seems to be lacking (for example, Roberts & Wrathmell 2002). Studies that underplay relief and other significant landscape features can end up isolating settlements from their topographical context; by, for example, only recording the spatial relationship of one settlement to another without showing how they relate to the topography.

Plan 5.12 in Chapter 5, shows how in this part of the eastern High Weald the topography is determined by the drainage system of the river Rother and its tributaries as it approaches the lower reaches of its course. The valleys widen out as the Rother and its principle tributaries — the Hexton and Newmill channels, and the Kent Ditch — join the western extremities of the Romney Marsh system proper. In this vicinity the land lies below the five metre contour, which during much of the Middle Ages was effectively the boundary between dry land and that liable to inundation by the sea — land that is still liable to winter flooding (Eddison 1985, 105 & Fig.1). This region of now drained marshland follows the course of the

Rother upstream, past its confluence with the Kent Ditch, to the western limits of Bodiam parish. Similarly, broad alluvial valleys exist in the Hexden Channel between the parishes of Newenden and Rolvenden, and in the Newmill Channel from its confluence with the Rother to just south of where the road from the Rolvenden Street to Tenterden crosses it. The interfluves between these four waterways form low ridges so that the three parishes of Rolvenden, Newenden and Bodiam have much gentler profiles to their uplands than many other parishes of the High Weald and this, together with their relative lack of tree cover, gives this part of the Weald a noticeably open aspect. The ridge in Newenden has a maximum elevation of 36 metres whilst for both Rolvenden and Bodiam the maximum is 71 metres. The land continues to rise to the west so that in Benenden, Salehurst and Etchingham parishes there are hills above 105 metres. It also happens that where the land rises above about 40 metres the short lateral streams that feed the greater waterways form steep sided ghylls², usually heavily wooded, which give the landscape a more precipitous and enclosed feeling. The major interfluves form pronounced ridges that extend in a westward direction into the heartland of the High Weald and it is they, together with the flatter valley bottoms of the principle waterways that create the dominant topographical features of the area. These are the broad themes of the landscape within which the settlement pattern sits, and it is this pattern that will be looked at in greater detail below. Plan 12.1

² 'Ghylls' is a local name for steep-sided, narrow valleys containing the tributary streams of the main watercourses. These ghylls are frequently heavily wooded and were until recently universally coppiced.

Plan 12.1 Settlement Pattern of Six Parishes



Settlement in the Kent Parishes [Plan 12.2 and Plate 12.1]

Benenden and Rolvenden occupy a ridge of higher land orientated northwest to southeast that forms the watershed between the Hexton and Newmill channels. The Wealden town of Cranbrook marks the western end of the ridge, and where it enters Benenden parish the ridgeline stands at about 100 metres. From this point it drops incrementally (as it passes through Rolvenden parish) to the five-metre contour near to the bridge at Potman's Hoath, in the vicinity of the county boundary with Sussex. Another ridge emerges from the Benenden ridge at Hemsted aligned in the direction of Biddenden and towards the northeast region of the county; this is part of the principle watershed between the Rother and Medway drainage systems. The Biddenden ridge carried a main droveway into the Weald in Saxon times, roughly along the line of the present lane (Witney, 1976, 133 Fig.13). Running parallel to it (and partly along the same alignment in places) was also one of the few Roman roads connecting the iron producing areas of the High Weald to the east of Kent (Margary, 1955, 4-41): thus the two routes were not exactly aligned and it is not certain whether the droveway was the successor to the Roman road, was making use of a pre-existing prehistoric track way, or was created by Saxon colonists (Stroud & Pollard 2005, 51).

The road that traverses the Benenden ridge (the modern B2086) is one of a series of long distance routes from Tonbridge leading towards Rye (Sussex) that proceeded via a branch from Rolvenden Street (approximately along the line of the modern A28, although the present course of the road is that of an early nineteenth century turnpike [Panton & Lawson 2004, 123]) to meet an alternative route that followed the Sandhurst ridge (A268) and from thence to the bridge over the Rother at Newenden.

The route along the Sandhurst ridge also originated in the vicinity of Tonbridge (an important crossing point of the River Medway on one of the main routes to the south coast out of London since at least medieval times [Banyard 2004, 35]) and proceeded via Ticehurst to Flimwell along the line of the watershed between the Medway and Rother drainage systems. Whereas, however, the ridgeline forming the watershed turns northeast through Bedgebury Forest to Benenden, the road continues eastwards through Hawkhurst to Newenden along the Sandhurst ridge/fault-line. This multiple configuration of routeways demonstrates one of the principle themes for the High Weald, whereby through-routes tend to follow the principle ridges and provide multiple alternatives for routes across the area — which was, no doubt, welcome when roads were poor and often impassable in bad weather (Witney 1976, 131).

Although the through routes favour the ridgelines, at some point each has to descend to the valleys to cross one or other of the principle watercourses. These cross routes are complemented by a multiplicity of local lanes whose purpose is to connect centres of habitation and allow access to their associated farmland. At the time of the tithe surveys, with few exceptions, the habitation elements of settlement were located in a few small, scattered hamlets; around individual farmsteads set within their fields; or associated with occasional country houses that were the centres of larger estates. As was seen in previous chapters, this settlement pattern is discernable from at least the twelfth century and in its essentials from much earlier. This then is the starting point for understanding settlement as it is in the present landscape.

In terms of the settlement pattern in the Kentish parishes, a cursory glance at a modern map suggests that there is a strong alignment of

habitation with the ridge top through-routes. For example, along the Benenden ridge, which traverses both Benenden and Rolvenden, the ridge top road passes through three of the hamlets in the two parishes and there is a string of 25 farmsteads along the way, most of which were present at the time of the tithe survey³. But much of this seems to be the result of late nineteenth and twentieth century investment in house building that largely took place within the vicinity of the hamlets, rather than a true reflection of the earlier settlement pattern. In the past, the distribution of habitation was less biased towards the ridge tops; for example, a further three early hamlets and nearly three times as many farmsteads are situated off the principle ridgelines. Furthermore, on closer examination even settlements along the ridge tops need further interpretation when viewed from the perspective of their topographical context. The farmsteads, although frequently situated on rising ground, are closely associated with headwaters of streams and springs. Although the pattern of tributary streams is faithfully recorded on OS maps, the full extent of the tributaries is not always obvious (especially on smaller scale maps) and for this reason the exact relationship between habitation and associated watercourses can easily be overlooked.

On the other hand, the three hamlets of Benenden Green, Rolvenden Street and Rolvenden Layne are on ridge top locations and could be interpreted as inherently ridge top settlements, especially as their location is not untypical for both the Kent and Sussex High Weald — other examples of similarly sited hamlets can be found at Goddard's Green (Benenden, now partly abandoned), Sandhurst Green (in a neighbouring Kent parish), and

³ It is often difficult to be certain as to which buildings described as farms on the map should be counted as representing ancient farmsteads. Whilst many (perhaps most) can be found in earlier documentation some are of fairly recent origin, or are houses that have been given older names.

Hurst Green (Sussex, previously half in Salehurst and half in Etchingham parishes). However, these now well-developed hamlets — which have, during the course of the twentieth century, developed into larger more village-like settlements — were, prior to the nineteenth century, rather different in character. As the names of many of these hamlets suggest they were built on or around small Wealden greens (most probably the remnants of early commons associated with the meeting of drove-ways and lanes; see below). Not uncommonly, these small greens have been lost through piecemeal enclosure — as at Rolvenden Layne⁴. This process is generally poorly documented and it is difficult to date the growth of habitation at these hamlets accurately. The map evidence suggests that many were still relatively open during the eighteenth century, with progressive development occurring during the nineteenth; prior to which these features were in effect small commons associated with a number of (typically, but not exclusively) medieval farmsteads, such as was seen at Layne Green and Kensham Green.

Despite the siting of the parish churches for both Benenden and Rolvenden on ridge top locations, and the importance of the ridges for the through routes, settlement in both parishes seems to have been orientated much more to the exploitation of land based resources off the principle ridges. The distribution of farmsteads is remarkably even across the landscape and although the majority are on minor lateral ridges, many are in the valleys near to crossing points on minor streams and others are clearly placed at the five-metre contour and above to take advantage of the more fertile alluviums of the Rother and its principle tributaries. A great

⁴ Written evidence for enclosure at Rolvenden Layne survives in the form of two affidavits by Thomas Cotton (1839) and Thomas Harden (1853) held at the Kent Record Office. Generally, few records exist apart from the occasional mentions in manorial court records, where these have survived. Any encroachment was probably by agreement.

many of these farms bear the names of settlements recorded in documents from at least the thirteenth century, some considerably earlier (Wallenberg 1934, 342-355), and a remarkably high number have late medieval farm houses (Pearson, Barnwell, and Adams 1994). It is probably safe to surmise that the majority of these farmsteads were in existence from at least the thirteenth century, which shows how stable the settlement pattern has been up to the eighteenth century.

Rolvenden parish contained a number of sub-manors, which later became independent although they were really little more than local farmsteads (Hasted 1798, vol. iv 188-196). Halden Place, exceptionally, became quite important for a time with significant owners who created a medieval deer park — a comparative rarity in this part of the Kentish Weald (Hasted 1798, 185-187), whilst Cassingham (later called Kensham) acquired renown through the person of William of Cassingham (Willekin, or Wilkin of the Weald) who successfully led the local resistance to the French invasion of 1216 (Stephens 1941, 216-223; Pilling 2008, 13). In Benenden there was a park at Hemsted from at least the sixteenth century (Suffolk Record Office HA43 TS01/242) and in Rolvenden during the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a few country houses were erected, which also acquired ornamental parks, such as Hole Park and Great Maytham. There were also a number of smaller houses with their own pleasure grounds, notably Merrington, Sparkwood, and Kingsgate. However, it was the parks at Hemsted, Great Maytham and Hole that were the most grandiose and by the mid eighteenth century were the centres of the largest estates — all situated on higher ground occupying outcrops of Tunbridge wells Sand overlaying more general areas of Wadhurst Clay.

The parish and township of Newenden, perched on the end of the Sandhurst ridge, is in many respects quite untypical of the other High Weald parishes in the study area. Its location at the confluence of the Rother, Hexton, and Newmill Channels at a point that gave easy access to the hinterland of the Kent and Sussex Weald gave it a strategic importance when the Rother was easily accessible at this juncture to sea going vessels (Draper 2004, 56). The site of a ninth-century Saxon Burgh, it was also the only place in the eastern High Weald to be recorded as having a market in Domesday and it later had borough status (KCC HER: TQ82 NE1 KE2708; TQ82 NW16 KE9448 and National Monument no: 12841). The boundary of the township within the parish was recorded on the tithe map, but by this time Newenden was little more than a hamlet (even the church had been partially demolished in 1701 because the population was too reduced to maintain it [Hasted 1798, vol. vii 171]), although, it continued to be an important crossing point on the Rother on one of the principle routes from Rye to London. A house of Carmelite Friars, founded at Lossenham in 1241/2, was dissolved in 1536/38 (KCC HER: KE2716); although never a wealthy house as a post-Conquest foundation in this part of the county it was a rarity. Lossenham (the capital manor for Newenden) is a medieval moated site but the house was rebuilt in the early seventeenth century, with later additions (KCC HER: ref. 180294). Unusually for a Kentish High Weald parish there are few medieval houses extant with the majority of surviving farmhouses and cottages dating from the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries⁵ — perhaps reflecting the decay of the original borough in the late Middle Ages prior to the establishment of a post-medieval farming economy on the demesne lands of Lossenham manor. After the

⁵ Established from Kent County Council heritage and environment records.

Appledore channel was closed to sea going vessels in 1623 land reclamation became paramount and the marshes around Newenden were finally secured for agriculture (Eddison 1985, 105-106). Effectively the available land in Newenden expanded and New Barn Farm was established below the previously definitive five-metre contour — it is recorded in the tithe survey but its foundation date is uncertain⁶.

⁶ The farmhouse is not listed and from external inspection by the author it is possibly late eighteenth century.

Plan 12.2 Settlement Pattern: Kent parishes

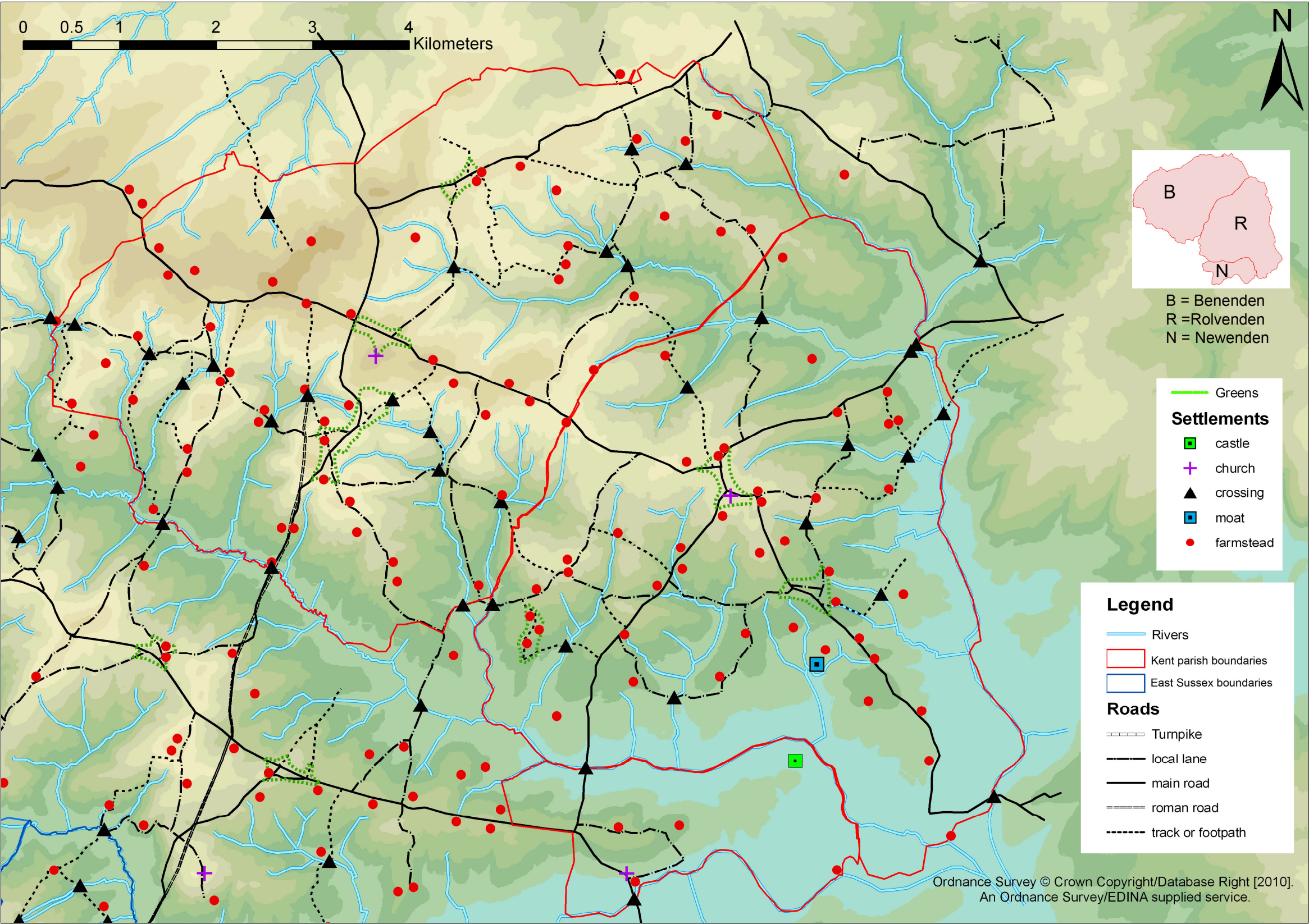


Plate 12. 1 Kent Today



The Street, Rolvenden with the Church of
St Mary the Virgin



Rolvenden near the confluence of the New
Mill and Hexden Channels



Green edge settlement of Iden Green



Typical Benenden landscape



Newenden, village school and Church of
St Peter



Bridge over the River Rother at
Newenden

Settlement in the Sussex Parishes [Plan 12.3 and Plate 12.2]

In discussing the Sussex parishes in the study area it needs to be remembered that the historic parishes of Etchingham and Salehurst had territory transferred in the 1950s to the civil parish of Hurst Green — a completely new entity created out of these two older parishes⁷. However, the settlement pattern for Hurst Green can best be understood in the historic context of Etchingham and Salehurst and for this reason Hurst Green is not treated as a separate parish in this analysis.

The topography of the Sussex parishes is similar to those on the Kentish side of the county boundary, and the settlement pattern reflects this: in particular, the importance of the ridge tops in providing significant through routes from London via Tonbridge to the south coast. One of the major (and most direct) of these crosses the northwest to southeast route between Ticehurst and Newenden at Flimwell from where it proceeds through Hurst Green towards the Rother (the present day A21). The valley of the river Rother dissects Etchingham and Salehurst parishes, whilst at Bodiam the river forms its southern boundary. The Rother is notorious for winter flooding, and the low-lying nature of the ground as well as the braided nature of the watercourse makes it a formidable barrier to north-south communication (Eddison 1985, 97-98), not fully overcome until the completion of the turnpike roads in the second half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth (Farrant 1999, 79). The Roman road from Hastings into Kent (passing through Benenden and Sandhurst) had crossed the Rother at Bodiam, where the *Classis Britannica* had a base (Cleere 1977, 16-19). However, this road went in the direction of Rochester

⁷ The ecclesiastical parish of Hurst Green was established in 1907, prior to the civil parish in 1952 (Chambers 1973, 212 & 2170).

as it passed north, which was too far to the east to easily connect with the Tonbridge route. In 1176 a Cistercian Abbey was founded in Salehurst parish, probably in the vicinity of the present village of Robertsbridge, and at about that time a bridging point was created here (Chambers 1973, 221). About 1210 the abbey was relocated to the east and later in the thirteenth century the borough of Robertsbridge (named after abbot Robert's bridge) was established (Martin & Martin 1974, 4-8; Bleach & Gardiner 1999, 42-43). The morphology of Robertsbridge is similar to some other medieval market towns where the market place was constructed parallel to an existing road, which was then diverted through the market place (for example, see Eaton Socon in Huntingdonshire).

Robertsbridge is located south of the river crossing, but a further centre of habitation grew up on the northern bridgehead, a hamlet called Northbridge Street. Earlier medieval settlement in Salehurst parish was further down stream along the valley a mile or so to the east at *Drigsell* (mentioned in Domesday but subsequently removed to make way for the Abbey) and Salehurst itself — an ancient hamlet above a river crossing where the parish church is also located (Morris 1976, 9:82; 9:83). A later hamlet grew up at Hurst Green on what appears to be a common on the boundary between Etchingham and Salehurst. Hurst Green is situated at a road junction, where the route between Lewes and Tenterden makes a staggered crossing of the main ridge top route from Tonbridge to Hastings and Rye. Hurst Green expanded further during the course of the twentieth century, after the establishment of the Anglican ecclesiastical parish, and has effectively become a village. Otherwise all three of the historic Sussex parishes in the study area have retained their dispersed settlement pattern.

The settlement at Etchingham was not built on the site of a green, and seems not to have developed into a hamlet until the post-medieval period. In the Middle Ages, it was a baronial holding of some importance and the Lordship of Etchingham powerful enough to create not only a new parish (thereby dividing Salehurst) but also able to draw into its boundaries land in the neighbouring hundreds of Shoyswell and Mountfield. Etchingham church was a new foundation when it was built in the fourteenth century (there was a previous church for the parish, but not on this site, possibly at Burgham elsewhere in the parish). This new church was built next to the principle manorial site and this is where the hamlet subsequently developed. Within the territory of the barony of Etchingham the lord's men-at-arms were granted sub-manors — the principle parish farms of today, such as Burgham, Pashley, Kitchingham etc. (Saul 1986; Martin 1988). These farms, like so many in this part of Sussex, are even more obviously associated with the lower slopes of the hills and valley bottoms than in Kent. Ridge top farms in Sussex appear to be later colonisation of poorer soil (Gardiner 1990, 42-43; 1995, 84). Therefore, the ridge top farms on the east side of Salehurst parish may represent land allotted to newly created farmsteads from about the twelfth century onwards, as happened elsewhere in East Sussex (Gardiner 1995, 94-99).

Nearly the whole of the parish of Bodiam lay within a single manor that until the sixteenth century remained undivided demesne, but the subsequent division created the pattern of farms found today (Salzman (ed.) 1973, 263). The church at Bodiam was built on the ridge top near to a significant manorial site with a green to the north — an abandoned moated site exists near the Kent Ditch to the north — but the full significance of this

site has not yet been ascertained⁸. Better known is Dallingrigge's fourteenth-century castle by the crossing of the Rother in the south of the parish. It is here that in the later Middle Ages a hamlet grew up, the core of the present settlement around the Rother bridge. This habitation centre now possesses a small 'village' green created in the twentieth century as part of a planned extension by Guinness Hop Farms for its workers. Also in the second half of the twentieth century, a great deal of housing has been built near to the church and this now forms a modern 'hamlet' for Bodiam. For its size, the Parish presents a complex and varied settlement morphology, which reflects especially layers of twentieth-century development.

⁸ Curzon assumed the site to be the original manorial site (Curzon 1926, 23), but Martin could find no evidence for occupation within the moat prior to the thirteenth century (Martin 1990, 97). The relationship of Peter's Green, this moated site, a mill, the line of a Roman road and other habitation elements are suggestive of an early settlement site.

Plan 12.3 Settlement Pattern: East Sussex Parishes

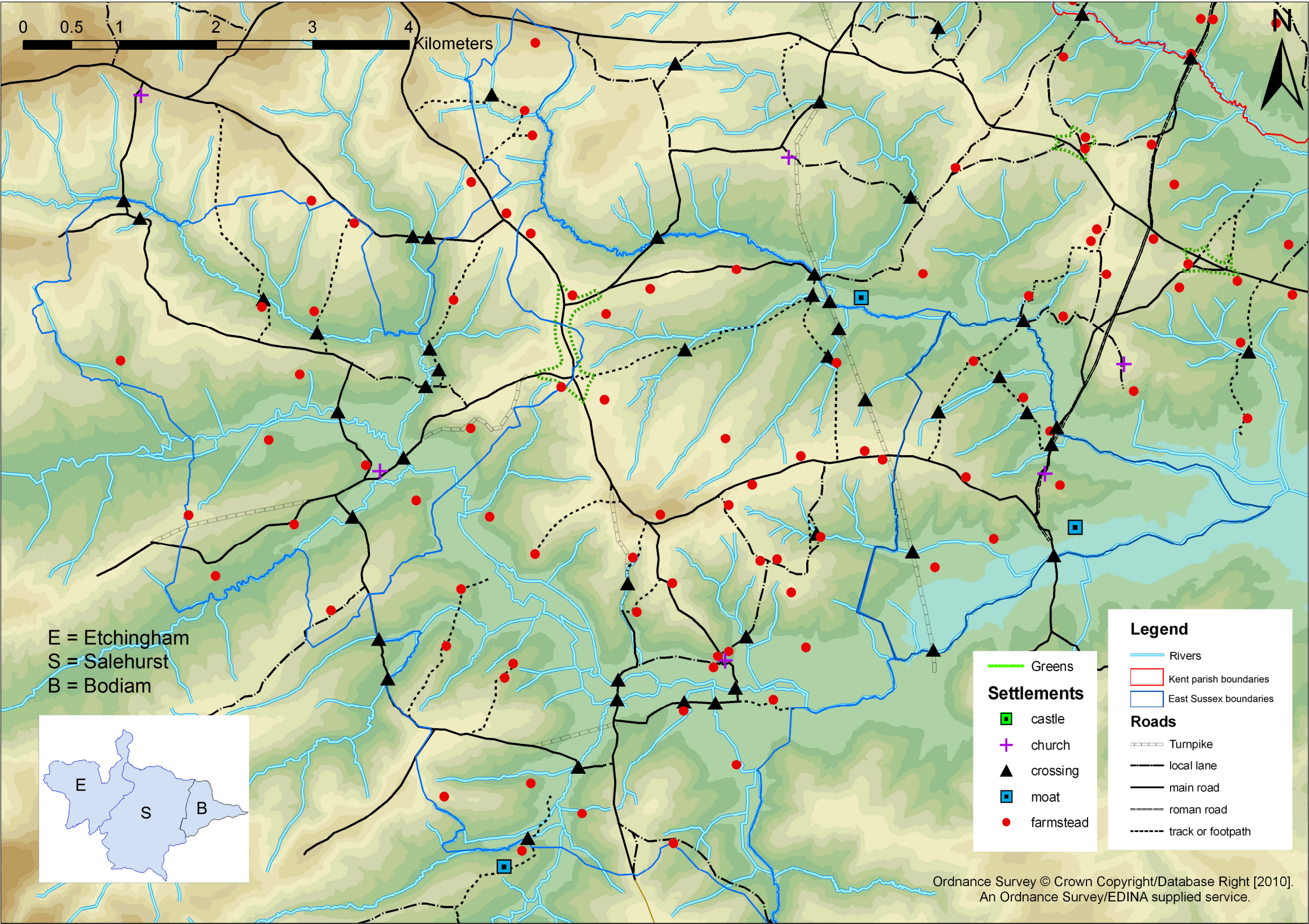


Plate 12. 2 East Sussex Today



Hamlet of Salehurst, church and associated farmsteads



Parsonage Farm, Salehurst



Hurst Green



Etchingham in its landscape



Bodiam Castle with vineyard



Hop Garden, Kitchenham Farm, Bodiam

The Elements of Settlement Morphology

The settlement patterns within the six parishes are complex and diverse, reflecting their history and the socio-economic forces that have created them. Understanding how the contemporary landscape, with its essential elements, has come about is a first step in developing an understanding of how to better manage present planning regimes and future development schemes. The issues discussed below represent some of the principle generic themes that underlie the evolution of rural settlement form in the High Weald.

Greens in the High Weald

Greens are a frequent occurrence in this part of the High Weald, although interestingly they have not been widely studied. This might be because they are small, most have been almost entirely enclosed and built upon, and many have lost their epithet over time — for example, Hasted records rather more on his maps of the Kentish hundreds than appear on the modern map (Hasted 1798, see hundred maps). Small greens are to be found on both the Kent and Sussex side of the county boundary, but are more common within the Kent parishes studied here than in those of East Sussex. In Kent, especially, there were a surprisingly large number of them, but their distribution was uneven. Witney describes in considerable detail the complex process by which the extensive Wealden commons associated with the early Lathes became enclosed and, later, attached to manors in the north and east of the county as ‘dens’ (Witney 1976, 31–55). By the Conquest the commons had dwindled to nearly nothing in the eastern High Weald, but it was not desirable to enclose all land. In a pastoral economy, space had to be found within which driven herds and flocks could be

managed along the routes of the droves — spaces indeed within which common rights could continue to be exercised.

Residual greens resulting from the enclosure of commons are not an unusual occurrence. Everitt has pointed out that greens on the North Downs of Kent are often associated with “common pastoral woodlands” and with the term ‘minnis’, an indication of a border area originating in common pasture rights (Everitt 1986, 147). Similarly, Warner proposes that relic greens on the claylands of East Suffolk are the result of the enclosure and cultivation of extensive commons in the late Saxon period and also typically relate to boundary areas (Warner 1987, 13-15). This area of East Suffolk is of particular interest because, like the Weald, it is one of apparent discontinuity between earlier Roman settlement and later Saxon colonisation (Warner 1987, pp 9-12). However, there are significant differences — for example, the primary settlement upon which the secondary settlement of the High Weald (in particular) depended was frequently at a greater distance, and often at a considerably greater distance than that found in Suffolk. More important, perhaps, is the fact that in the eastern High Weald greens are not necessarily associated with border areas and boundaries — they are often positioned centrally to the geography of the Wealden parishes and their location relates to their function and not to the concept of marginality.

The broad settlement pattern of the High Weald seems to have been established by the time of Domesday (Sawyer 1976, 1-2; Gardiner 1995, 94), and greens had developed as part of this process. With the development of the High Wealden dens, over time, into ‘private’ space the remaining commons, especially the roadside greens, became particularly important for as long as there were large movements of animals in the area. Without

exception they are situated either along the main drove routes on the ridge tops, or at the principal cross-routes connecting the ridge-top drove ways. They occur on level areas of ground and at the junctions of through routes with local lanes, where they would have the double utility of providing overnight stopping off points for livestock passing through, as well as collection and dispersal points for the flocks and herds connected to local farmsteads. Green locations often also had the poorer soils that did not favour arable production.

For the most part, the map evidence that exists for the greens is no earlier than the eighteenth century, when they were already going through a process of enclosure. However, Peter's Green at Bodiam (now fully enclosed) is shown on an early estate map of 1671 (ESRO: AMS 5691-3-1), when the green (then called Knowls Green) was not yet fully enclosed but has peripheral tenements that may represent earlier enclosures. Plate 12.3. Most examples were either fully enclosed or mainly so by the time of the tithe surveys and continued thereafter to be growth points for habitation. Green sites with churches were sometimes chosen for late nineteenth and twentieth century experiments in village building, as happened at Benenden and later at Rolvenden⁹.

Fields and Field Sizes

The High Weald is a landscape of small fields farmed in severalty (Brandon 2003, 4). Baker has found, for example, that pre-1700 estate maps from Kent show that the Weald was almost entirely free of unenclosed fields of any sort (Baker 1962, 179). However, this does not mean that these fields have remained unchanged since they were created in medieval times. Many

⁹ As Bowen has recorded, in this part of the High Weald churches which stand alone in fields (and actually have always done so) are often assumed by local tradition to be so because a previous village was abandoned through plague, for example at Sandhurst (Bowen 1939, 32).

seventeenth and eighteenth-century estate maps show a pattern of fields that was still evolving, although these changes were often small scale and sporadic. A plan of Parsonage Farm, Salehurst dated 1714 (ESRO: AMS 5860) shows a pattern of fields that by the time of the tithe map (ESRO: TD/E86) have a considerable number of changes (both amalgamations and further subdivision). On the other hand, many field boundaries seem to have remained unchanged for very long periods: for example, the boundaries of the fields attached to Benenden paper mill in 1630 (CKS: U1506/P1) had not changed by the time of the tithe award in 1840 (CCA: DCb/To/B6A&B).

Within the eastern High Weald there are two distinctive types of field boundary treatments. On the uplands, hedges form the traditional field boundary, but on the levels along the valley bottoms and in the marshlands fields are commonly divided by water filled ditches. It is the hedges that have invited the most interest, partly because of their potential antiquity, but also because hedges are found over a greater area and characterise the Wealden landscape. A study done by Taylor in Benenden proved that the periods that saw the greatest hedge loss were that of 1777 to 1876 and that following the Second World War (Taylor 1995, 24). At those times many hedgerows were grubbed out, the result is seen especially where the landform is relatively level. Generally, detailed evidence (such as Taylor's data for Benenden) is difficult to find: however, Bowen claims that there were few changes in Rolvenden between 1839 and 1939 with none in the marshland (Bowen 1939, fn. 45). To some extent the disparity between parishes may reflect land usage: for example, in Benenden there was an increase in arable between 1777 and 1840 (Benenden Parish Terrier 1777, CKS P20/27/2; Benenden Tithe Award, CKS P20/27/3), whilst Rolvenden

retained the older pattern of convertible agriculture in 1838 (CCA DCb/To/R7A&B). Further hedge loss in the second part of the twentieth century seems to be related to the increased use of machinery, particularly for arable production. Further detailed work needs to be done on a parish-by-parish basis on the process of field ‘rationalisation’.

Fields in the High Weald are commonly given two sets of measurements, the ‘outfield’ where the measurement is made from the centre of a hedge or shaw, and the ‘infield’ which records the part that could be ploughed or mown (Baker 1973, 385). Although this form of measurement is not unique to this area, the often quite large differences between the two indicate the nature of the fields in terms of their agricultural management. Field sizes in the High Weald parishes were small, but varied both between parishes in the study area and within individual parishes. Table 12.1 gives a breakdown of field size at the time of the tithe surveys, which although of a comparatively late date most likely reflects average Wealden field sizes from earlier times. Generally, field size tended to relate to the nature of the terrain — those on the more level and open land, such as at Newenden, were considerable larger than those on the steeper terrain that is so typical of parishes like Benenden. Field size and the visual qualities of the hedges and shaws that divide them are an important aspect of the landscape character in the High Weald.

Table 12.1 Field Sizes in the Eastern High Weald

	AVERAGE FIELD SIZE						
	Arable	Arable & Hops	Hops	Meadow	Pasture	Fields (unspecified)	Average Field Acreage per Parish
<i>EAST SUSSEX</i>							
Bodiam	6.6		6.7	6.5	6.4		6.4
Salehurst	5.6		5.6	5.8	5.6		5.6
Etchingham	7.1	6.0	6.3	4.4	5.5	6.3	6.1
<i>KENT</i>							
Benenden			2.3			3.9	3.9
Rolvenden			4.4			5.7	5.7
Newenden	6.7		5.9		7.0		7.0

Church Sites

Churches are significant buildings within the Wealden landscape, and by far the majority are medieval in origin. In the Low Weald of Kent churches were often placed on riverbanks, near springs or at crossing points (Witney 1976, 144; Everitt 1986, 295). However, in the High Weald churches occupied a variety of locations; in Kent they were predominantly on hilltops, at the junction of ridgeway routes at green locations, whilst in Sussex, especially along the Rother valley, churches were frequently built on lower ground. Greens were obvious locations because they were convenient and accessible meeting places, and in parishes such as Rolvenden and Benenden where greens were abundant, a logical choice. However, greens also provided free land to build on, in an area where the earliest church building was not necessarily connected with manorial sites (although there were exceptions to this, for example at Sandhurst, where the church seems to have been located near a major manorial site rather than at the green a mile further). Everitt has suggested that hilltop churches may have originated through the need for a prominent landmark in a heavily forested countryside (Everitt 1986, 295), but it is difficult to be completely convinced

by this for two reasons. First, although churches built on the ridge tops are obviously more visible — they are usually only so from one direction; secondly, as the early churches were most likely constructed of wood, it is difficult to believe that they were intended to be seen from a distance at their date of origin. Later, no doubt, when the wooden churches were rebuilt in stone the possibility for display was realised.

The Sussex churches in the study are more likely to be found near settlement in the Rother valley — none of the medieval churches in the Sussex parishes were at greens (the church at Hurst Green is modern). Many more Sussex churches were later medieval foundations, which may account for their location near manorial sites. However, the Sussex churches built in the valleys, such as Etchingham or Salehurst, were easily seen from the surrounded hills and tended, thereby to dominate their home territory in a way that the Kent churches did not; in that respect they are possibly more akin to the riverside manorial churches of Huntingdonshire. The church at Bodiam occupies an interesting location. A post-Domesday foundation, Bodiam church is associated with a manorial site — although the original position of the ‘hall’ is not known. The church stands on a narrow ridge of land, which makes it visible from more than one direction. Bodiam church was built directly above a green, away from, but dominating a river crossing.

Routeways

There have been three major phases of road development in the High Weald. One was the network of roads organised by the Romans, mainly to service their important iron industry (and possibly other forest industry); another was the evolution of the pattern of drove roads and local lanes to connect agricultural communities (the date of the origins of this network is

not really known for certain, but in its surviving form was at least confirmed during the early Middle Ages); the last was the building of the turnpike roads during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (still the basis of the A and B road system in the area today). All of these have had their effect on the settlement pattern and morphology¹⁰. Although road transport is now pre-eminent, few Wealden roads have been significantly up-graded since the time of the turnpike-building programme — excepting the addition of tarmac surfaces, some road widening on major routes and limited junction improvements. The many miles of narrow, twisting country lanes still dominate the road network and are a feature of the Wealden landscape.

Plate 12.4

Routeways are interesting, because they both respond to the pattern of settlement (that is, they are put where people need to go), and influence its development — people build where there is ready access. Similarly, their influence on settlement form can be long term, for once roads are established within the built environment they are resistant to change — much more so than the buildings they serve, which may be rebuilt many times.

Wealden Industry

The High Weald has also hosted industries of national importance, and not just those connected with agricultural production. In Kent the late medieval Wealden textile industry persisted into the seventeenth century, but its effects on settlement morphology was usually through indirect processes: for example, the generation of investment funds to stimulate the

¹⁰ The later twentieth century road-building programme, which saw the creation of a limited network of motorways, is not considered here as none directly affected the area under discussion. However, the Robertsbridge by-pass has influenced its settlement's later morphology.

land market (Zell 1994; Andrewes 2000; Zell & Chalklin 2004). On the other hand the effects of the iron industry, predominantly based in Sussex, led to some major engineered adaptations to the topography within many parishes, some of which had long term effects on local settlement morphology and landscape features. In the early modern period Etchingham and Robertsbridge were both important iron centres and plant was often associated with estate centres (as at Iridge, see Plate 12.5). However, the iron industry was finished by the opening years of the eighteenth century (Cleere & Crossley 1985; Andrewes 2000).

In terms of the contemporary landscape neither the iron nor textile industries have left very obvious remains in the six parishes studied. There is a series of minor earthworks such as iron ore pits, pond bays (more likely to be related to fulling than iron manufacture) and slag from bloomeries — iron sites can be of any date from pre-Roman times onward. Benenden and Rolvenden were broadcloth producers, but the textile trade (by its nature as predominantly a cottage industry) did not impinge directly on to the landscape to any degree. Waterpower was an important source of energy and most parishes along the Rother and its main tributaries had water mills to do with a variety of industries including fulling, paper making, and the milling of corn (Zell & Chalklin 2004). Windmills became more common in this part of the Weald from the eighteenth century and there were examples in Benenden and Rolvenden situated high on the ridgeline, but not Newenden. Newenden was not good for waterpower, surrounded as it was by marsh and the nearest windmill seems to have been just over the parish boundary in Sandhurst. In the Sussex parishes, bordering the Rother, watermills remained the principle source of local industrial power.

Wealden industry is perceived as an important contributor to settlement form, although (despite its importance from a socio-economic perspective of the area's past) it is often difficult to recognise its effect on contemporary morphologies. For example, the textile industry has not deeply affected current settlement morphology. However, a number of abandoned industrial sites of potential archaeological significance would need to be taken into consideration in the event of future planned development.

Plate 12.3 Knowls Green, Bodiam (now Peter's Green), map of Bodiam Manor Lands, 1671. [ESRO: AMS 5691-3-1]: detail

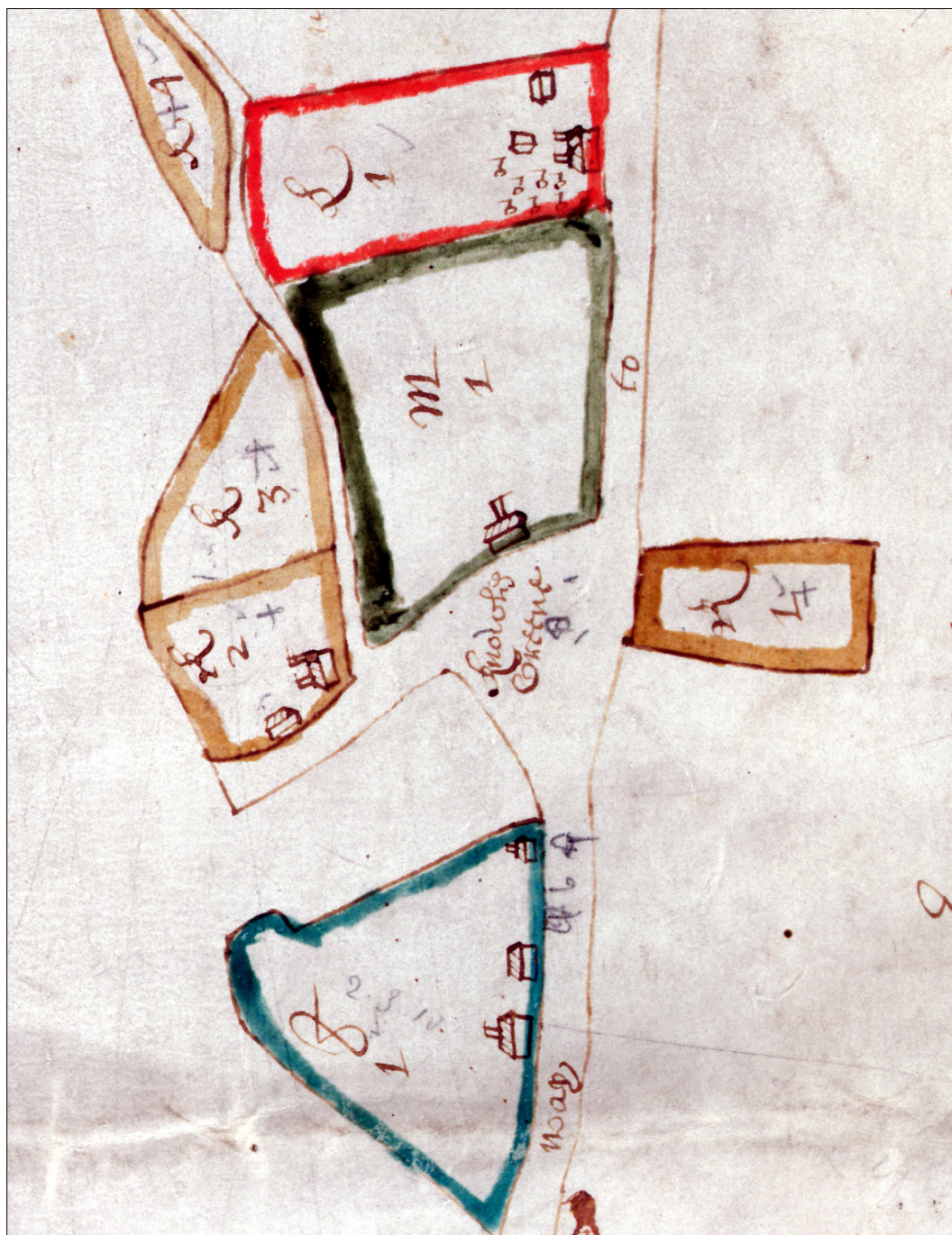


Plate 12.4 High Weald Routeways: [courtesy of the High Weald Unit, Historic Routeways Project 2009/10]

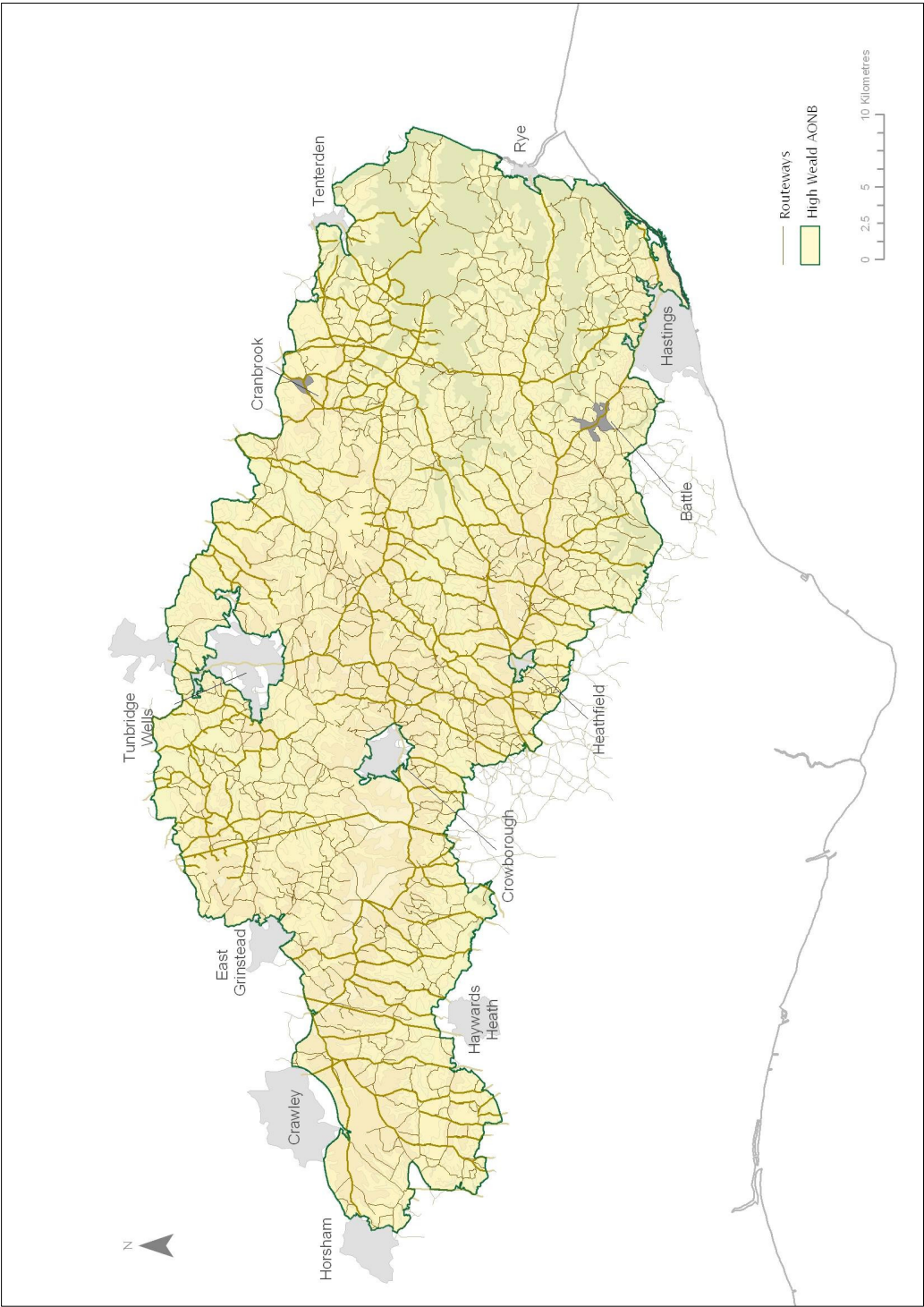


Plate 12.5 Iridge Estate, Salehurst: showing the ponds and mills of the Iridge works – detail [ESRO: ACC 6732-2-1637]



COMMENTARY

Historically habitation in this part of the High Weald has been highly dispersed and of low density when compared to many other areas of the country and, despite the expansion of development over the last one hundred and fifty years, remains so today. Although there has been some development outside the hamlets as traditional farm buildings have become redundant and been converted for residential purposes, mostly development has taken the form of slow and steady growth of early hamlets and at the remaining greens. Following the planning policy adopted after the 1947 Planning Act, development has occurred most readily at those hamlets that are on the major routeways simply because they are the ones best supported by local infrastructure. The narrow country lanes that criss-cross the High Weald are not suitable for access to large-scale developments off the main routes and there are now initiatives to reduce the impact of motor traffic along them in many districts (Briggs & Fullwood 2004). New developments in an AONB have planning implications that call for an enhanced knowledge of the historic significance of past developments in the broader landscape.

The origins of settlement and its impact on the landscape have received much attention, both here and elsewhere. However, the concept of the 'English village' that emerged during the course of the nineteenth century and persisted throughout most of the twentieth, has had as much influence on the development of Wealden settlement morphology as anything else¹¹. However, because of the low level of new development generally in the Weald, examples are few and far between. The most

¹¹ This reflects nineteenth-century ideas of the quintessential English village based upon an understanding of the Anglo-Saxon Settlement and the origins of the English State fashionable at the time (Taylor 1983, 109).

palpable instance is at Benenden where, when Lord Cranbrook acquired the Hemsted estate in 1858 he set about “improving” Benenden Green by opening up the view to the church from the main road, turning the pastureland of the old green into a lawn suitable for village cricket, as well as building various civic buildings around it including a school house and village hall (Plate 12.6). During the course of the twentieth century further examples emerged, mostly at the larger settlements, which became the preferred location for both council housing and private housing developments. Often (but not invariably) these new developments incorporated the ‘village’ concept of houses around a green; examples of this approach can be seen at Bodiam and Rolvenden. For most of this period local people were not concerned whether settlements that were previously hamlets were transformed into ‘villages’ if this brought them the conveniences of modern living.

Hamlets in this part of the High Weald are a particular phenomenon, which have received surprisingly little attention in the past. The development of hamlets seems to have been facilitated by the occurrence of pre-existing functional elements such as road junctions, river crossings, the siting of parish churches or significant manorial sites. Greens, which were closely associated with road junctions and were often also chosen for church sites, tended to be prime spots for hamlet development. The earliest hamlets like Salehurst were clusters of three or more farmsteads and some of the later manorial centres like Etchingham and Bodiam may not have counted as hamlets at all in their earlier phases. The concept of a Wealden hamlet as it appears in the time of the tithe surveys as a collection of small tenements typically occupied by small tradesmen may, outside of townships like Newenden and Robertsbridge have been unknown before the post-medieval

period. For a long time rural habitation in this area was likely to have been represented almost exclusively by the (usually isolated) farmstead and it is legitimate, therefore, to ask the question to what extent hamlets, prior to the eighteenth century, were part of an authentic traditional settlement pattern.

Plate 12.6 Nineteenth and twentieth century developments to Settlement Form in Benenden and Bodiam



Benenden Green, as modified by Lord Cranbrook in the 1860s



Bodiam: Green and labourers' cottages by Guinness hopfarms, post 1950



Benenden Green: parish church incorporated into village design



Benenden Green: National School for Girls and Infants, 1862, built along the western edge of the improved Green

Considering the reputation that the High Weald has as a well-wooded countryside, it may be considered surprising that so little mention has been made of the relationship between woodlands and contemporary settlement in this study. This is partly because the six parishes are away from the most densely wooded parts of the Weald (the exception being Hemsted Forest in the north of Benenden parish). Secondly, there are few blocks of woodland near to the main centres of habitation. Such woods as there are in the target parishes survived through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as gaming preserves of the greater estates, not just managed woodlands for timber. The commercial woodlands were mainly in the steeper valleys of the ghylls, which were managed as coppice with standing timber. These were commercially very important, but now sadly neglected for the main part. The early historic importance of the relationship between settlement, agriculture and woodlands became gradually less clear after the Middle Ages.

Understanding the diversity and origins of settlement morphology within the six parishes is necessary for successfully planning future development that preserves landscape character of the High Weald. Even though the topography of the six parishes is similar, tenure, land management and land use is differentiated and real (if subtle) variations in settlement distribution and morphology may be discerned. There are good evidential reasons to believe that settlement patterns in the High Weald remained fundamentally unchanged from the late Middle Ages (and possibly earlier) until the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. Subsequently, settlement morphology in the High Weald was to be reshaped by the effects of increases in population, urbanisation and even changing fashions in the interpretation and belief in the character of rural settlement.

This has led to the transformation of farmsteads or groups of farmsteads into ‘hamlets’, and hamlets into ‘villages’, as well as the creation of a higher density of dispersed homesteads generally. It is realised that little has been written here about the form of Wealden farmsteads, despite their importance as a settlement type within the historical pattern of settlement. The farmstead consisted of the farmhouse, farm buildings, yards, closes, orchards and gardens — usually set together close to the land that comprised the farm (Martin & Martin 2006, 27). How these elements were arranged differed widely in High Wealden farms, which makes the task of describing their form meaningfully in a general way difficult¹².

During the twentieth century in particular, changing agricultural production methods have rendered redundant many of the buildings that were previously required, including barns, byres and the farmhouses and cottages previously needed for those who worked the land — on the larger estates, in particular, agriculture is mainly done by external contractors¹³. This has meant that more people can now live and work in the converted redundant buildings. Investment from external sources of wealth has had an effect on settlement development — although it has also often had the result of reinforcing some traditional patterns of land use and encouraged counter-urbanisation. More people who have made their money in the non-agricultural sector are tempted to buy houses and land in what they see as unspoilt countryside and many feel the desire to have a go at being small-scale farmers. For these reasons the High Weald has, arguably, remained more truly rural than, say, the Ouse Valley.

¹² For a recent extensive study of farms in the High Weald see the report by Edwards 2007, for the HWU.

¹³ Verified by a personal comment from Edward Barham, owner of Hole Park Estate, Rolvenden.

Only recently has public awareness begun to be raised about the true nature of the historic morphology of the High Weald settlements, partly as a result of the educative work of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit, but also because money from the City has made this area one of refuge, attracting people with an interest in buying into the rural idyll with the means to support the vision. The rural economy of the High Weald has been largely preserved through this mechanism — a tradition that has long roots stretching back to the Early Modern period at least. In the High Weald, therefore, in contrast to the Ouse Valley for example, the socio-economic conditions allow for the continued maintenance of traditional settlement patterns and morphologies.

Part Four:
CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 13: A CRITICAL SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS

*In my beginning is my end. In succession
Houses rise and fall, crumble, are extended,
Are removed, destroyed, restored, or in their place
Is an open field, or a factory, or a by-pass.¹*

¹ from East Coker, The Four Quartets, 1940, by T S Eliot, lines 1-4.

INTRODUCTION

The writing of this thesis has involved a journey for the author, which began with the over-arching idea that future change to contemporary rural settlement can be achieved more sympathetically by exploring the origins and ongoing development of that settlement's *form*. It was hoped that understanding a place's origins would encourage future development to be both more purposeful and meaningful. The way forward seemed to be the evolution of a methodology that would allow an analysis of settlement morphology fit for that purpose. However, before exploring the results of this undertaking more fully, it is necessary to bring to mind the initial hypothesis.

As set out in the Preface, the thesis is concerned with a key research question that strives to address how to manage the future of historical settlement in rural areas as a response to contemporary development pressures. The research has pursued a number of specific objectives concerning the design and testing of a methodology that is able to produce locally orientated interpretative narratives — narratives capable of informing the management of historically sensitive environments and future development within them.

This study recognizes that the historical form of contemporary rural settlement has been subject to systemic changes to its socio-economic structure, especially since the end of the Second World War. The response to this has been twofold — firstly, at the official level by incremental changes in the planning law to extend protection to significant elements of the historical environment. Secondly, in a less formal forum, local communities at the start of the twenty-first century are increasingly concerned to preserve what they see as the *sense of place* of where they live.

It is proposed that both responses require a knowledge base suited to the needs of those caring for, managing and making development decisions at the level of specific localities.

The aim of this thesis has been to create detailed interpretative narratives (hereafter simply called a narrative) of two areas with substantially different characteristics, using tried and tested techniques developed by landscape historians and others from related disciplines, in order to make an original contribution to knowledge of the historical environment for these areas. To achieve this at an appropriate resolution has meant developing a locally orientated methodology, which will operate effectively in varied locations and be capable of analysing settlement pattern and morphology, as it has developed over time.

This chapter summarises the results and forms conclusions drawn from the two local studies. It examines the outcomes of the research from three broad perspectives, each of which deals with a key aspect of the study. First, it makes a critical examination of the methodology; secondly, it explores the insights to be gained from the case study material itself; and thirdly, it looks at the significance of the historical analysis to the practical business of future development and gauges the potential of detailed narratives to this end.

REVIEWING THE METHODOLOGY

Chapter 4 identified a number of desired attributes for the proposed methodology. For example, the methodology needed to be flexible enough to deal with a wide range of source material, the findings of previous settlement studies, and adept at recording the experience of *place*. Essentially, the methodology needed to be capable of recording continuity

and change in settlement morphology over time. A critical analytical approach, based on ideas formulated by M R Conzen, was identified as desirable.

An analytical framework was devised that takes account of the topographical context of the study area, identifies the morphological elements (tangible and observable features in the landscape), and defines intangible elements — socio-economic and experiential constituents that help to explain the evolution of settlement. By observing the relationship between the morphological and experiential elements of the landscape over time, this approach clarifies how the morphology of the settlement has developed. The final analysis is expressed as a narrative that draws the data together, interprets it, and tells the story of the settlement in a coherent way.

Although grounded in principles and techniques widely used by a number of established disciplines, this methodology is distinctive in that it is purposefully structured to effectively work at the local level in a way that is meaningful to settlement specific issues — a pre-requisite for planning and local management decisions.

How the Methodology Compares to Other Approaches

The actual practical work of research was based on the normal practice of undertaking initial desk research, followed by field observation, leading to a final analysis. The initial desk study and field observation are systematic applications of techniques used by most landscape historians (for example, the identification of landscape features and socio-economic phenomenon; retrogressive and comparative analysis). The methodology draws heavily upon contemporary approaches to landscape history, but structures these to focus the research upon the *local* without sacrificing the *regional*

perspective: this is essential for understanding the broader context of local settlement form. Where the methodology differs from some other approaches is that it attempts to be inclusive at the local level of analysis, taking all landscape attributes into account equally: there is no attempt, therefore, to filter out ‘untypical’ observations at either the regional, or sub-regional level. Where appropriate, comment is made upon the differences and similarities between settlements, but without giving regionally *typical* features greater weight in terms of local significance. Thus the tendency of many regional approaches, to present particular settlement patterns or attributes as regional norms, is avoided (for example, in Roberts and Wrathmell’s *Region and Place*).

The method uses GIS as a tool in helping to record, illustrate and analyse the research findings — but only as a tool — supporting the content of the narrative as the principle means of recording the findings of the research. In this respect the methodology used here is quite different to English Heritage’s historic landscape characterisation. The use of an interpretative narrative allows the rationale of the analysis to be fully explained and the significance of settlement form to be explored.

The process for synthesising an interpretative narrative from the information gathered at the research stage draws upon Conzen’s approach for the study of settlement morphology. The key elements of Conzen’s method are form (settlement morphology), morphogenic periods (an expression of the timescale relevant to settlement development), and resolution (the level of analysis). Whilst this approach is well known to urban morphologists and occasionally used by historical geographers it has not been widely used by landscape historians.

Levels of Resolution in the Study Areas

A strength of the Conzenian method is that because it primarily collects locally orientated material, once this has been assembled different levels of resolution can be constructed to give a regional or sub-regional perspective.

For the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley three possible levels of resolution were considered pertinent to the study. At the first level of resolution the settlements in each parish were analysed in sufficient detail to establish their form and their major periods of development. This was presented in the narrative in such a way to allow the Ouse Valley parishes to be considered as a group. Additionally, for St Neots and its hinterland the analysis was discussed in further detail to capture the complexity of its unusual morphology: an approach that could also be expanded to cover the other parishes in time if it were felt to be useful. The broadest level was the sub-region consisting of Bedfordshire, South Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire; this analysis was derived from the primary level of resolution and provided a broad context to the study area.

The High Weald, as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, forms an extensive sub-region with identifiable boundaries and a statutory designation that influences the type and nature of permissible development. The six selected parishes were investigated at the same level of resolution as that undertaken for the Ouse Valley parishes, but more would be needed if the High Weald sub-region were to be satisfactorily analysed as a whole. The regional context was considered as part of the setting of the study area, but only in a general way.

The aim in each study area was to provide the optimum level of detail needed for development decisions. The more complex analysis undertaken

for the Ouse Valley reflects the greater degree of development pressures on its settlements, compared to those of the better-protected Wealden parishes.

The Relationship between Regional and Local Studies

The relationship between regional studies and locally orientated studies depends largely on issues surrounding the chosen level of analysis, or in Conzenian terms resolution. Many (if not most) approaches to the study of settlement are locked into being either regional or local in essence. Where the level of resolution is regional it is not detailed enough to perform well at the local level where, for example, site-specific interpretation is required. However, the Conzenian approach appears to be able to move almost seamlessly from the local to the general. This is structurally important to the methodology because it allows the relationship between the locally orientated analysis and its regional context to be articulated.

In the past, regional approaches have been largely justified on the grounds that establishing broad typologies helps us to better understand regional (and even national) variations in settlement character. As an approach it works well where such perspectives are an aid to understanding, rather than a yardstick for site-specific decision-making. However, as the planning process seeks ways of establishing the relative significance of specific elements of settlement form, the lack of resolution found within regional analysis is becoming an issue. Most regional analyses have begun as academic approaches to settlement studies, without the expectation that they will necessarily be called upon to inform practical management and development decisions. An exception is English Heritage's historic landscape characterisation, which is promoted as being specifically designed to inform the planning process. It is, therefore, fair to review its practical potential in this respect.

Critiquing the H L C for the Ouse Valley and the High Weald

The origins, intentions and characteristics of the national scheme behind HLC have been critiqued in Chapter 3. The conclusion was that although the original aim of treating all landscapes as having historic value is good, HLC has serious deficiencies as a scheme in planning terms. This is partly because it has adopted a very narrow definition of settlement: equating it principally with the built environment, rather than the broader definition that recognises all spatial elements of a socio-economic system to be directly related to settlement form. Secondly, there is a lack of a critical interpretation of the outputs within the system itself at local settlement level. Thirdly, there are inconsistencies in how information is presented across county surveys and, finally, the level of resolution of the county-level surveys is too low to be effective as a local planning tool.

There are four HLC surveys that together cover the two study areas, all researched by different organisations or individuals. These cover the counties of Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Kent and East Sussex. Each survey has its own set of typological data that are derived independently and each uses slightly different terminological categories. All, however, follow the requirements of English Heritage that the results should be recorded on a modern map-base, showing the researcher's estimate of the period of origin of current land use.

Although a number of different sources have been used for each of the county areas, the principal historic source is the 1st edition 25", or 6" Ordnance Survey. HLC is, in fact principally a desk-based research project that compares the 1st edition OS survey with the modern map and records the findings using a GIS based system. Each of the county surveys produced are accompanied by an explanation of the typology used, a description of

broad historic landscape characteristics (where these have been produced), sources used etc. Some of these accompanying notes are quite extensive (Kent's, for example, is contained in no less than three volumes). The guidance tends to concentrate on the establishment and description of broad historic landscape types within each county, but does not offer a critical interpretation of the results for individual settlements. HLC is not designed to engage at the scale of analysis needed for development control (that is, at the scale of analysis required to validate the historic significance at the level for individual planning applications).

The availability of the survey material has been an issue when comparing outputs between HLC and the research methodology used in this study. Whilst there are examples of earlier HLC surveys for other parts of the country (e.g. Devon) that are available interactively 'on line', this is not the case for those surveys covering the study areas. For the Ouse Valley parishes, the Cambridgeshire county survey material is available from the county archaeology unit on request, but it is not actively promoted because of concerns that the data in its present form is difficult to interpret. In fact the Cambridgeshire county archaeological service is developing an in-house system partly based on the HLC data but incorporating a wider range of information drawn from other sources. In Bedfordshire concerns about accuracy have also delayed the launch of its HLC and the current HLC assessment is still considered work in progress. Kent commissioned a survey in 1999, which is available from the county HER; however, this is now undergoing revision because of concerns about resolution. Sussex has only just launched their survey, which has a more refined resolution and a greater complexity of analysis than the other HLC assessments available for the parishes looked at in this study. Any comparison between the HLC

assessments for the study areas and the approach employed in this research are clearly affected by the incomplete nature of the relevant HLC surveys.

HLC produces a mosaic of elements from different periods as they appear in the contemporary landscape. However, it is not able to explain their origins or significance, or relate individual features to others. However, HLC is good at identifying broad historic landscape types at sub-regional level — the scale at which it was designed to operate — and it compliments the high-resolution local analysis by providing the broader context. Arguably, HLC, although useful, is not the right tool to inform local development control decisions.

It is suggested that the narrative is the more informative at the scale of resolution needed to evaluate each individual settlement. Using a narrative it is possible to explain how features in the contemporary landscape, originating at different periods, relate to each other. This is essential in determining the significance of elements of settlement morphology for the purpose of managing conservation and future development in the historical environment. A narrative style is also able to explain the socio-economic factors that help to interpret the origins and development of morphological elements in the landscape.

How the Methodology Performed and its Future Development

There are a number of issues that arise from the methodology. One such issue is that because the interpretative narratives for the two study areas are designed to inform local decision-making they are of necessity complex and detailed. Although the narratives may be simplified to some degree (in order to make them more understandable to a lay readership, for example) they cannot be summarised without compromising their primary

purpose of defining local settlement form. However, a process of summarising a number of local narratives may produce very clear regional analysis for lower resolution, contextualising studies. Thus a duality of use occurs when applying locally orientated studies to a group of local settlements, in that individually they provide high-resolution narratives, but together they may easily be made to merge into regional or sub-regional lower-resolution narratives.

The methodology performed well when presented with a different evidential base in each of the study areas. Despite differences in the morphogenic record between the areas, broad comparisons could be made which helped to relate the narratives of each of the areas to a national narrative. This proved to be particularly useful when considering post-Conquest settlement form: a critical period for the origins of later settlement patterns and morphology in both study areas.

Each narrative provides an accurate record of the academic enquiry, but each has a structure differentiated to a degree by the nature of the evidential base and (to a lesser extent) the level of detail that the evidential base could provide. This variation, however, would only signify where a point by point comparison between study areas is required, which was not felt to be critical as the primary objective of each narrative is specific to the settlements in each area. Another issue is whether the complex nature of each narrative is (as it stands) sufficiently accessible to non-experts interested in the management and future development of local settlement. In this respect it is felt that further work on the narratives is needed to make them more approachable by the lay reader — this is principally a matter of presentation and does not suggest a simplification of the critical complexity of the outputs. A solution to this issue is explored in greater detail below.

The spatial analyses of the study areas record the visual character created by the built environment as an aspect of the spatial relationships of settlement form. It might have been desirable to provide greater detail of architectural style and materials, which are important for the character of any particular settlement. However, as space was limited, and the spatial relationship of buildings to other elements is less well understood, it was decided to concentrate on that. This was felt justified as a great deal has already been written on the visual quality imparted by local built form and building materials and this work is readily available elsewhere². How architectural elements of visual character are recorded in guidance documents is explored in the last section of this chapter.

Although much has been learnt from deploying the methodology in two quite distinct areas of settled landscape, further studies in other areas would allow it to be tested more rigorously. It would be interesting, for example, to see the results of studying groups of parishes that lie across the boundaries of other distinctive geographical areas. It may be that quite a different perspective would be gained if regional boundaries were tested in this way — allowing, perhaps, for a typology of ‘differences’ or the identification of a settlement pattern where a series of gentle graduations lead from one geographical region to the next. This might lead to interesting insights about the whole notion of regional settlement-type boundaries.

Finally, the significance of involving local communities identified by the methodology did not lead to the resolution as to how this should be done in practice. In the event, community involvement was unsystematic and erratic. A solution to this issue will only be found if further research

² For example, the Pevsner architectural guides in the English county series.

into community participation occurs. It may be possible to identify existing work by social scientists that could be adapted to function within a landscape history context.

UNDERSTANDING THE STUDY AREAS

In the Preface it was pointed out that we live in a long-settled countryside with the overwhelming number of settlements being of some antiquity — many of very great antiquity. Rural settlements are generally what the rider on the Clapham omnibus might describe as ‘old’. Each will have a unique history with features from many ages, including modern elements: some elements will have been planned, whilst others will have grown organically. What often distinguishes historical development in rural places from today’s development is the rate and scale of change on the one hand, and the socio-economic factors behind that change on the other. The challenges in the management of change is as much about accommodating the shift from an agriculturally based economy to an urbanised one as it is about balancing the spatial requirements of a rising population.

It has already been postulated that the parish level analysis of local settlement necessitates the recording of complex and detailed information that cannot be easily reduced without risking the loss of essential detail. Therefore, a simple set of summaries for each of the parishes would not be appropriate, except as a contribution to understanding the broader context where a lower resolution analysis is acceptable. However, useful insights can be obtained from a discussion of broad issues that emerge from the parish analysis, as this helps us to better understand rural settlement in general terms. Significant issues arising from an examination of morphogenic periods and settlement morphology are discussed here. Finally, issues that affect how we regard rural settlement are explored.

Morphogenic Periods and their Impact

Recording periods of continuity and change within specific rural settlements creates a morphogenic framework around which an interpretative narrative can be written. The resulting pattern of morphogenic periods will be unique to that settlement, but their morphogenic periods frequently also relate to broad historical movements within a national context. Comparing these structural changes for individual settlements with others allows the effect of wider, regional or national movements to be distinguished from the more local. For example, the establishment of ecclesiastical parishes from the tenth century to the thirteenth was a national phenomenon that affected both study areas over the same time frame. This morphogenesis laid down the foundations for the network of parishes, which over a long period of time and through a complex process of transition, became the civil parishes within which rural settlement is still organised.

Other large-scale changes have influenced the development of settlements over a wide geographical area, but not necessarily simultaneously. Thus, for example, the introduction of communal farming practices into the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley in the Middle Ages had a profound impact on the communities that adopted it, and was part of a progressive movement that affected a succession of settlements over an extended geographical area and time period. However, communal farming practices that are closely associated with nucleated settlement did not completely obliterate dispersed settlement or farming in severalty in the Ouse Valley — individual settlements retained their distinctiveness in these respects. The ending of common agricultural practices during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced a further layer of changes

on settlement morphology in Huntingdonshire, which reintroduced farming in severalty as the norm and created more dispersed farmstead settlement.

Most (if not quite all) settlements in both study areas have been affected by industrialisation and urbanisation, but to different degrees and over diverse timescales — another example of a national trend producing a significant period of settlement morphogenesis. One need only look at the location of modern housing estates at St Neots and St Ives in the Ouse Valley, or the siting of council housing provision at Rolvenden or Bodiam in the High Weald, to become aware of the relative impact in each area.

Purely local socio-economic developments may profoundly change the morphology of an individual settlement, but have no physical impact on others: for example, the siting of Wealden iron works or the steam mills of the Huntingdonshire commercial farming interests of the nineteenth century. Where there are no specific event horizons, such as those associated with the introduction of communal farming practices or the Parliamentary Inclosure movement in Huntingdonshire, large-scale morphogenic periods are more difficult to discern. In areas such as the High Weald significant and wide-spread socio-economic movements (such as the cloth trade) may leave little evidence of change in settlement form, or be very localized. In areas of continuity or gradual change these sub-regional morphogenic periods may in fact be absent. However, this is an issue of resolution, and in Wealden parishes the very localised changes that happened over long periods of time are as significant for individual settlements as more generalised movements were to Huntingdonshire settlements as a group.

The results of this study suggest that there are times when large-scale ‘national’ or regional movements affect a great number of settlements over an extended period of time, but that such events are rare. Between these events there are long periods of comparative stability during which local changes take on more importance for individual settlements.

Changes to Settlement Form

The detailed local analysis for both the High Weald and the Ouse Valley has highlighted how varied the morphology of each landscape can be. The Ouse valley, for example, is not just planned countryside even though the wider regional analysis tends to suggest that this is so. The research carried out in Huntingdonshire has demonstrated that there is a complexity of settlement *form* within the area. Similarly, the detailed research results from the Weald indicate that although this is historically an area of old enclosures and dispersed settlement, there are significant examples of planned settlement (although not, of course, of open fields) from the Middle Ages to the late twentieth century. Planned settlements like Robertsbridge are few, but not that unusual, and later examples of planned elements such as the late nineteenth century developments at Benenden or the small council estates that were built at the larger settlements during the course of the twentieth century should not be overlooked. These, however, tend to escape the net of the regional analysis, although they are often dominant elements when viewed at the local level — a reality that planners and the managers of the historic environment will recognise.

Settlement form may change quite radically over time, and what may appear to be a dominant type in one age will sometimes be overtaken by something different in another. The effects of the changes of socio-economic conditions on the Ouse Valley that facilitated a more nucleated

settlement pattern has been mentioned above, but the area never completely lost its residual elements of dispersal. Meanwhile, the dispersed settlement of the High Weald retained its character into the nineteenth century, whilst it has arguably been moving towards a more nucleated form since the eighteenth century. Subsequent urbanisation generally seems to have encouraged nucleation within both areas.

The overarching conclusion from the results of the local studies, however, is that the influence of national or regional trends on the morphology of individual settlements is modified by other purely local events. Local settlement form is unique and, in the case of decisions made for specific places, knowledge of other places may help to interpret local features and elements, but it cannot on its own determine their significance: significance in most cases, it is suggested, is understood in the context of class similarities and individual uniqueness.

The Nature of Rural Settlement

How settlement form is perceived directly affects how future development is planned and implemented. Five themes are examined in the following paragraphs, which although arising from the study of individual settlements relate to the broader context in which they subsist. Understanding how these key themes relate to the *sense of place* helps practitioners and local communities to better comprehend the nature of settlement morphology and would support more informed management practices and guidance.

Theme 1 — Continuity and Change

It seems that in both study areas, the pattern of settlement (and in varying degrees its form, also) once determined during the course of the

Middle Ages has remained remarkably stable. Likewise, later developments that are the results of twentieth-century urbanisation are evident in both the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley and the Eastern High Weald. The factors that lie behind these national trends, the ones which affect the rate and nature of change within rural settlements and their landscapes, are commonly grounded in socio-economic movements related to changing demography; the strength of economic activity; and changes in technology, management methods, and levels of inward investment in the local economy.

Nearly all of the most significant adaptations to twelfth-century settlement morphology have occurred within the last 100 to 150 years, and this is in itself significant. Looked at more closely it says something about the nature of change itself. Change is driven by socio-economic factors of the kind described above, but also by technological advances that now enable fundamental change to the physical structure of settlement morphology to be accelerated at a greater pace than ever before. In the past, because the technology of change continued fundamentally unchanged, it was possible to believe that older development was of no greater value than new development, but this is arguably no longer the case. Landscapes are always changing and this is an historical phenomenon; however, contemporary changes are different in character and scale and need to be judged by new criteria. The impact of contemporary development methods is clearly demonstrated by what has occurred at Love's Farm at St Neots, where earlier morphologies have simply been swept aside. The fact is that development methods today tend to radically alter existing morphologies in ways that are irreversible, and therefore extra care needs to be taken to ensure that such development is beneficial in the long-term to the settlements in which they are introduced.

The lessons of continuity encourage the long view. Indeed, planning law and regulation (as outlined in the first four chapters) recognise that earlier morphologies need protecting from current development processes if the historical basis of current settlement form is to survive: hence the creation of Conservation Areas, National Lists, AONBs and the other historic classifications.

Theme 2 -- Settlement Dispersal

What has become clear is that degrees of dispersal are relative and not absolute and that settlement patterns are closely related to settlement morphology (see in particular the discussion on Eynesbury). These issues have been considered at some length by others in the past, and recently Roberts and Wrathmell have usefully summarised the main arguments with observation that the terms nucleated and dispersed represent two ends of a spectrum (Roberts and Wrathmell 2002, 16 & 173-174). The idea of considering the degree of dispersal as a way of describing settlement pattern has been found to be at its most convincing at the regional level of analysis: at the local level it is much more problematic and an exploration of settlement form was generally found to be more productive (for example, as set out in Chapter 7 for the Ouse Valley). This is especially so when considering the contribution of morphological studies to the practical issues of planning practice, where the spatial relationships between different elements are of particular significance.

Theme 3 -- Field Morphology and Enclosure

An investigation of field morphology in both areas raised interesting questions in terms of the development of settlement form. In the High Weald parishes, for instance, the assumption about the stability of field morphology was at times found to be questionable. Undoubtedly, many

hedgerows are very ancient and a good percentage of fields have changed little, certainly over the last few hundred years when good map evidence is available. However, there is also evidence that field amalgamation and division is not just a more recent phenomenon (as was seen to be the case in Salehurst), and this needs to be considered when discussing field morphology in the current Wealden landscape. In the High Weald, where development schemes tend to be relatively small-scale, new development is generally contained within existing field boundaries.

The issue of enclosure has lessened in importance as an influence on contemporary development. Whereas at one time small-scale development often reflected the pattern left by previous enclosure, much modern development is on a large scale that subjects widespread areas to clearance. In the Ouse Valley, although much is known about post-Parliamentary Inclosure fields and of the open fields that they supplanted, there is still much to learn about the continuity of field and furlong boundaries, especially over the span of time before the introduction of common agricultural practices and since its eclipse in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Bearing in mind the ability of persistent boundaries to lend a sense of continuity to new development (a common occurrence in the past), a better use of field morphology may help to humanise the design of some modern developments and give them a deeper sense of continuity.

Theme 4 -- Planned Elements

In the past, significant planned elements have occurred in both of the study areas considered here, sometimes as small extensions to existing settlements but often as new ones. There are a number of examples in the Ouse Valley of twelfth-century planned settlements (for example, Hemingford Grey, Eynesbury and Eaton Socon). Similarly planned

settlements in the High Weald were found to be present, but less common, usually later in date and more frequently found in Sussex than in Kent (for example, Robertsbridge, a thirteenth-century planned settlement). Planned settlement in both study areas tended to have similar morphological elements, different from but typical to each area. In the context of the current preference for expanding existing settlements rather than designing new ones, how these older planned elements work in the landscape may help to suggest better ways to design additions to existing morphologies — as well as in the creation of new ones when green-field site developments are considered.

Theme 5 -- Relationship of Settlement Form and Tenure

Tenure has had a strong influence on settlement form in a number of ways. In the Ouse Valley settlements it can often be seen at its most straightforward where, in those parts of the landscape dominated by later enclosure, the pattern of development is frequently directly related to the distribution of the ‘new’ inclosures. For example, later nineteenth century development often occurred first on the smaller allotments created by Parliamentary Inclosure around the older settlement centres (for example, at St Neots). As the pace of development quickened during the twentieth century, the larger allotments away from the older centres were developed, often in multiples rather than as individual allotments. Nowadays it is not extraordinary for whole farms to be bought for development as happened at Love’s Farm — a unit of tenure dating from the eighteenth century, itself a product of Parliamentary Inclosure.

In the Weald tenure had a more subtle influence on settlement form, and was partly responsible for the maintenance of dispersed patterns of settlement on the one hand, and the encouragement of nucleated elements

on the other. So that, post-medieval tenurial relationships as recorded in the tithe surveys of 1838/40, influenced the number and distribution of farmsteads. Where holdings were very small (as happened on some of the larger estates) those without their own farmsteads were often tenanted by hamlet dwellers: such tenants might also have another trade or work for others as well.

How processes such as tenure have influenced the development of settlement form in the past suggests that, if traditional settlement forms are to be maintained for the future, they will need economic under-pinning. The fact that in the Weald a traditional settlement form is still being maintained by a robust, contemporary socio-economic process undoubtedly helps in the conservation of its settlement morphology. The greater development pressures within the Ouse Valley presents a more challenging regime for historical environment conservation.

Summary

The nature of rural settlement morphology under the broad themes arising from the research is complex, especially when comparing the two study areas. The principal elements of this analysis, therefore, are summarized in Table 13.1, below.

Table 13.1: The Nature of Rural Settlement Form in Huntingdonshire & the Eastern High Weald — Summary

THEME	HUNTINGDONSHIRE	HIGH WEALD	COMMENTS
1. CONTINUITY & CHANGE TO SETTLEMENT MORPHOLOGY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong continuity from the 12th C. 2. Radical changes from the mid-19th C. 3. On-going radical expansion to settlement form. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong continuity from the 12th C. 2. Incremental changes to settlement form from about late 17th C. 3. Trend towards nucleation of form. 	Exact patterns of the degree of continuity & change are very specific to individual settlements. Changes driven by factors including socio-economic, demographic, and level of technological capacity.
2. SETTLEMENT DISPERSAL	Dispersal pattern related to individual settlement history. This changes over time.	Dispersal pattern related to individual settlement history. This changes over time.	Degrees of dispersal are relative and need to be approached with caution. Regional generalisations can distort an understanding of individual settlement form.
3. FIELD MORPHOLOGY & ENCLOSURE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Settlements subject to large-scale changes to enclosure patterns over the long-term. 2. Post-Parliamentary inclosure influenced settlement form prior to later 20th C land management regimes. 3. Continuity in settlement morphology an issue. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fully enclosed landscape since early Middle Ages, lends stability to field morphology. 2. Field boundaries subject to continuous small-scale changes. 3. Continuity of boundaries in settlement morphology not an issue. 	In terms of field morphology and enclosure, the Weald has experienced more change than often realized. Changes to settlement morphology in Huntingdonshire related to field form and enclosure is a major issue for settlement form continuity.
4. PLANNED SETTLEMENT ELEMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many settlements subject to planned elements in the Middle Ages, especially in the 12th C. 2. Later planned elements occur with increased frequency in the modern period. 3. Lack of continuity between earlier & later planned form. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Few planned elements in the Middle Ages, which also tend to be later than those in Huntingdonshire. 2. Often better sense of continuity between historical and contemporary design. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Historically, planned elements in both areas have similar morphologies, but show regional differences. 2. In terms of design, contemporary planning could learn from previously established principles.
5. RELATIONSHIP OF SETTLEMENT FORM & TENURE	Late 19 th C & early 20 th C settlement morphology strongly influenced by post-Parliamentary inclosure tenure and allotment patterns.	Traditional Wealden patterns of tenure, tended to maintain the network of dispersed farmsteads. The survival of smaller tenancies eventually encouraged nucleation at Wealden green sites.	Traditional patterns of settlement form reliant on tenure types, and generally dissipate with changes in socio-economic circumstances.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND ITS POTENTIAL

This section explores issues relevant to the application of the narrative to the practical management of the historic environment. Research into historical settlement morphology in rural areas has three principle functions. First, it provides the evidence for *significance*, an essential part of the practical planning and management process. Secondly, it provides the knowledge base and the necessary interpretation to support the production of essential guidance by local planning authorities and other bodies such as English Heritage. Thirdly, it provides a corpus of knowledge available to local communities to enhance understanding of local settlement, sustainability, and local character.

Planning practice, as it has developed for the protection of the historic environment, is primarily about conservation. The planning guidance that arises from this process seeks to protect heritage assets by fostering an approach to conservation that, whilst permitting change also enhances what currently exists. The emphasis is on managing new development in such a way that it does not adversely affect sensitive or vulnerable historic resources. It follows that for planning guidance to be effective, and inspire confidence in the planning system by communities, developers and others, it will require a level of certainty that what is proposed is accurate, comprehensive and reliable.

Significance of Historical Elements

The way that the planning system works encourages an approach that puts value on individual elements of the historical environment. Planning policy anticipates that development control decisions require choices to be made between existing (historical features) and proposed new development

(DCMS, 2010, PPS 5: para 7; HE7-HE10). This in itself encourages local planning authorities to assess the significance of the various elements that make up the historical environment in their district. Additionally, where it is agreed that particular elements of the historical environment have special historic value, the law offers the additional statutory protection of designation — such as Listed Building or Conservation Area status. Designation helps development control panels to evaluate the impact of proposed developments, but at the same time arguably places a secondary value on other historical elements that are not designated as such. For this reason, guidance documents are vital for recording the significance of all the elements of the local historical environment.

Sustainable Growth

Everyone working for the benefit of the historical environment should be aware of the requirement to deliver sustainable development (PPS 1), which is reiterated in PPS5 paragraph 7.1³, and reflected in the sentiment that government at all levels should strive to retain local distinctiveness, and protect, enhance and promote the historical environment (The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010)⁴. This means making sure that what is done today does not have to be undone tomorrow; or ensuring that the original state can be regained as far as possible if necessary. This is especially important in relation to proposed new development that affects the settings of valued heritage assets, and usually this depends in turn upon understanding the character of historic settlements. Therefore, in producing criteria for sustainable development in

³ Regrettably, this later policy has dropped the earlier reference to "...not sacrificing what future generations will value for the sake of short-term and often illusory gains" (PPG 15: 1.3).

⁴ Although issued by the previous Labour government, this advice reflects previous policy issued by a previous Conservative government (DENH, CM 1200 1990).

historical environments, planning guidance documents expect the effective evaluation of significance.

Local Character

Assessing the character of a settlement is an attempt to determine the effect of its form on an observer in as objective a way as possible. This is an important process as it sets the benchmark against which decisions on conservation, regeneration, enhancement and judging the suitability of new development are evaluated. English Heritage has published general guidelines on the management aspects, as well as on those for appraising character (English Heritage 2006a & 2006b). However, the advice on how to present appraisals is very plan-based, reflecting perhaps its commitment to GIS systems (and the influence of the pre-existing HLC data-set). Defining character, however, is arguably better achieved by concentrating on the ground view, reserving plan-based techniques to illustrating points that cannot otherwise be easily visualised.

In practice, there are a number of factors that help to construct *character*, which can be considered under the following themes — topography, the spatial relationship between morphological elements, and visual quality. Of course, in order to fully understand the themes — and thereby character — it is also necessary to ascertain the significance of these elements in terms of their historicity.

Topography

Visually the topographical setting of a settlement contributes largely to its character. Besides determining any outstanding natural features such as rivers and hills that so often typify a place, it will affect the extent and type of views into and out of the settlement. Topography will also determine how the built environment sits in the landscape — affecting the visibility of

buildings. Topography also effects horizon and the perceived proportionality between land and sky. Topography will also, of course, have affected history of the settlement — influencing its origins, for example.

Spatial Relationship of Elements

Understanding the spatial relationship of the various elements of a settlement's morphology is central to its character. Spatial relationships are pertinent to the broad, structural elements of a settlement's morphology (created by road networks and larger scale developments from different morphogenic periods), and smaller scale and more localised sites within it (for example, individual buildings within their curtilages). This is a complex area, which for development purposes needs detailed local analysis and assessment. Detailed research into a settlement's morphological history, such as that generated through extensive local studies, is often the key to helping to unravel this complexity. The spatial relationship between the built environment and open countryside is also significant, and this relationship within the context of a settlement's topology will be crucial in terms of future development decisions.

Visual Quality

Assessing visual quality is instrumental in conveying the way in which a settlement's morphology is experienced on the ground. The assessment will cover a wide range of observable features, including architectural quality, building materials, the effect of colour, the impact of the green environment, and the grain of the built environment itself. For example, in some places buildings form continuous street frontages, whilst elsewhere there are clear spaces between buildings creating a more open grain effect. The height and regularity of eave-lines and ridge-lines of buildings in the streetscape can convey how formal or informal the scene appears. The width

and alignment of roads, and the existence and disposition of landmarks can also contribute to general character.

Attempting to convey the richness and effect of all of these elements is the job of planning guidance documents. The next section looks at how the formulation of planning guidance functions and the contribution that the narrative makes to this process.

Guidance for Managing the Historical Environment

Planning policy guidance documents, issued by central government, explain how policy should be understood and applied in general terms. This is supplemented by local planning guidance for the practical management of the historical environment in each area. Interpretative narratives of the type produced in this study can provide the technical knowledge and judgements needed for local guidance. However, in practice there is a process of transferring this information from the narrative into a form usable by a range of guidance documents.

The Purpose of Local Planning Guidance

The term 'local planning guidance' is used here primarily to cover those documents that offer advice and guidance to planners, developers, property owners and others (as well as information to local communities and the general public) on local development matters. These may cover a wide range of topics, although those considered here will look specifically at issues associated with the historical environment. Local planning authorities normally issue local guidance documents, although other organisations (for example, AONB joint advisory committees and English Heritage) may also issue local guidance from time to time. Typically, these documents will have

formal status as material consideration for planning decisions, but the exact nature and scope of their contribution to the planning process will vary.

Bearing in mind that planning regulation is mostly concerned with controlling the conservation, restoration, and the management of historical elements in the spatial environment, much of the emphasis in guidance documents is on those processes. However, guidance documents are usually also concerned with the control of any new development that may have an impact on buildings and areas considered to have historical merit. It might be argued that in the past, primary legislation was concerned with offering protection to spatial elements (including buildings, open spaces and occasionally traditional land use) that was considered *historic* in the strict meaning of the term. Thus, for example, the first conservation areas were established nationally during the late 1960s in major medieval settlements with a high number of ancient buildings. This was reflected in the slightly later initial designations in Huntingdonshire, where for example St Neots (1971), Godmanchester (1972), and Buckden (1974) were early conservation areas with boundaries tightly drawn around their listed buildings. More recently, with increased development pressures on rural settlement the emphasis seems to be changing from the *historic* environment to the *historical*. Conservation areas have been expanding, with extensions to existing ones and new areas being designated that might not previously have been considered 'special' enough. Likewise, guidance has been developed that tackles classes of historical buildings, such as farm outbuildings, and has moved beyond the consideration of the more strictly defined historic buildings on the National List. This shift has occurred without changes to primary legislation, but supported by an enlarged public appetite for a more inclusive attitude to the historical. This is a significant shift, and begs the

question whether all historical rural settlement should in some way be subject to similar planning guidance as that normally reserved for designated conservation areas.

The contents of guidance documents dealing with aspects of both the historic and historical environment is of particular concern to landscape historians, and remain a major focus for the advice they are qualified to offer. The scope of these documents, however, is constrained by the requirements of the planning system they are designed to support, which tends to pre-determine their type, style and content.

Guidance for the Management of the Historical Environment

Most guidance documents are designed to support a quite narrow range of conservation and planning activities, although their content has arguably been widening in scope as the complexity and interrelationship of elements of the historical environment has become more apparent over the years. Furthermore, historical analysis seems to be an important component of a greater range of advice documentation, including guidance for the design of new development located near to existing historical settlement. This may be the result of planners and developers becoming more aware of the contribution of past tradition and the public's taste for it. So that, for example, the revival of local vernacular styles, the formation of 'village greens' as a focus for new settlement, as well as the retention of pre-existing spatial elements within the overall design of new works, may reflect the shift from an appreciation of the historic to the historical.

Each of the following forms of guidance are an opportunity for well researched interpretative historical narratives to influence how historical settlement morphologies are managed and develop in the future.

Listed Buildings and Scheduled Sites

Listed buildings and scheduled sites are significant historic elements in a settlement's morphology. The act of listing and scheduling itself produces historical, as well as architectural information that may be used in the planning process. However, their effectiveness relies on the accuracy of the information that they contain. The list, or schedule description is often quite brief and it may be at times that it is too reliant upon the information supplied by a third party without more thorough checks being made. This area is not well researched, considering the significance that list descriptions can have for planning decisions. However, many practitioners routinely check these descriptions against the findings of the latest research⁵.

Many planning authorities supply additional guidance to owners of listed buildings (and landowners whose property contains a scheduled site), advising them on their legal responsibilities regarding the proper care, maintenance and restoration of these items together with restrictions on new development within the curtilage and settings of these properties. In many cases this information could be broadened out to include a wider morphological awareness of the role these assets play within the settlement. This would be particularly welcome in relation to proposed development affecting heritage assets, as set out in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, policies HE7 to HE10 (DCMS, 2010).

Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas provide the greatest opportunity for the study of a settlement's morphology, and indeed this is essential for their proper management as required by the legislation and official guidance. This applies to each stage in the conduct of the process by the local planning

⁵ Conversations with conservation officers indicate that this may be a problem area.

authority — from the justification of designation, through the assessment of character, and the formulation of an appropriate management plan. It is probable that many local planning authorities fail to carry out all of these stages adequately, although the situation may be expected to change since the improved advice from English Heritage has been published (English Heritage 2006a, 2006b, 2008).

How the methodology developed in this study can help determine the content and approach to conservation area guidance documents is demonstrated in Appendices H and G. This example of a conservation area assessment, produced for Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey in Huntingdonshire, has since been adopted by the local planning authority.

Parish, or Village Design Statements and Plans

Village design statements and parish plans have existed in some areas for a number of years. More local planning authorities are promoting their production than previously, although there are no national statistics available describing the exact situation — these initiatives tend to be the result of local policy. Typically the production of these documents are undertaken by the local communities to which they apply and, where the local planning authority approves their content, may be adopted as material consideration in the development control process. Parish, or village design statements and plans are a good way for local communities to contribute to the planning process, and interpretative historic narratives concerning the morphology of settlement can aid their success as well as making the local community more knowledgeable (English Heritage 2008, 20).

Areas of Protected Countryside

Consideration of guidance concerning issues around elements of protected countryside (for example Sites of Special Scientific Interest) is

largely outside the scope of this study. However, development within AONBs and National Parks would be an exception. In the case of the High Weald AONB it was established in the course of this study that a number of advisory documents have been produced aimed at local planning authorities, developers, landowners and the general public. The Wealden chapters in this study would be suitable for informing this purpose and recent research into historic routeways, involving local community groups, might also contribute to future guidance⁶.

Historical Elements not Subject to Specific Statutory Protection

There are significant elements, such as historic parks and gardens, historic buildings on the 'local list' and battlefields that are not given extra statutory protection in the way that nationally listed buildings and conservation areas have⁷. However, planning authorities are still expected to extend protection to such sites under the planning system (PPS 5: HE9.1). Similarly there is a very general duty for planning authorities under their local planning policy to protect the wider historic landscape (PPS 5: paras. 5, 6, and 7; policy HE7.1). This lays the ground for local planning authorities to initiate local policies that give more protection to the historical environment than may have been the case in the past. This would fit well with the public interest in the protection of historical settlement morphology in a wider set of circumstances than that afforded to just conservation areas. It follows from this that more detailed guidance than is currently contained in many local planning frameworks may be needed. It is suggested that the model for such supplementary guidance on historic

6 This refers to an ongoing research project by the High Weald Unit in partnership with the University of East Anglia, which commenced in December 2009.

7 Historic Parks and Gardens, although not given additional statutory protection by the National Register as such, are subject to statutory designation under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953.

settlement would logically follow the format for conservation area character assessments — even though the additional statutory protection afforded to designated conservation areas, as such, would not apply to the generality of the historical environment.

Listening to Local Communities

A case has been made in this study for the emergence of increased community interest in the welfare of their environment during the course of the twentieth century, and this includes the way in which rural settlements are permitted to develop. Early pronouncements from the recently elected Coalition Government hint that communities may indeed be given specific powers to help decide whether newly proposed development should be allowed — even ahead of details of a government Bill being published dealing with this issue there are examples of local referenda being held over local planning proposals⁸. This approach marks a step change on from what has gone before, when local planning authorities had a simple duty to consult local communities — a situation where even democratically elected parish councils are no more than statutory consultees. Currently, the promotion and defence of local community identity often falls to local activists summoning enough arguments and support to influence the decision-makers. A change in legislation could mean that local activists will in the future need to persuade their local communities instead.

If the contribution of local communities to the process of identifying a *sense of place* is now to be recognised as more central to the planning process, the issue of how that is done and even the way that local

⁸ An example is the public vote held at Sheringham, Norfolk, (autumn 2010) over a long running dispute as to whether a supermarket should be built in the town. At that stage, the outcome could only be 'advisory' and North Norfolk DC building control panel later made the final decision.

communities become educated for the task takes on greater significance. In the past difficulties have been encountered in synthesising and validating the community contribution to the process, and any proposed changes will make a resolution to this more urgent. A way forward may be found in solving the paradox caused by seeking to define local character through the perspectives of the community, whilst at the same time judging significance largely through the views of subject experts. Tentatively, it is suggested that interpretative narratives have a part to play in this process, as they are capable of incorporating the community's sense of place with academic research. The importance of interventions by (external) experts to inform local communities about the significance of local character is widely recognised; but ways now need to be found to better record community perspectives, incorporate them into the narrative more consistently, and test those perceptions with the communities themselves. In the meantime, existing evidence for what particular communities believe to be important to their enduring *sense of place* needs to be taken into account by those charged with the management of the historical environment.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The idea that the results of academic research into the origins and continued development of rural settlement can have a practical utility, not just the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity, will appeal to many landscape historians and others concerned with the welfare of the historical environment. In pursuit of this, the study has expanded on previous scholarship and added to it. The research has contributed to the existing literature by bringing together ideas on the conservation of both the built environment and spatial elements within the countryside, and how these are related through policy and practice within the management of the historical

environment. The research recognizes the link between related disciplines such as urban morphology, landscape history, archaeology and historical geography and has developed this further within the broader context of settlement morphology studies. Specifically, the thesis has expanded the current literature on the transition between the East Midlands and East Anglian regions, with the analysis of Huntingdonshire settlement complementing previous research on Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

Within the context of the two study areas, this research makes an original contribution to our knowledge of areas previously little studied. In particular, the early history of settlement and parish formation in both Huntingdonshire and the Eastern High Weald. Specifically, the account of the relationship between High Weald settlement on either side of the Kent and East Sussex border offers a perspective previously largely ignored. Additionally, this study offers a new insight into settlement at the time of Domesday within the High Weald, and how this compared with settlement along the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley at the time.

This study has attempted to marry together serious scholarship in two study areas with the requirements of what might broadly be termed the planning process. This has not been an easy task, and its shortcomings will be obvious. Not least in respect of the gap between the narratives and the form in which these narratives need to be expressed in terms of the guidance documents — for which further work needs to be done if this deficiency is to be overcome. However, it is suggested that this does not invalidate the narratives themselves, or the studies that underpin them, because they are the source material upon which the determination of *value* and *significance* of the historical environment (as required by the planning system) is grounded. In this context, it is the complexity and detail that the

narratives record that validate them as a suitable basis for agreeing relative value and significance because the scholarship is transparent and the results open to inspection.

Secondly, it is also clear that more work needs to be done to determine and incorporate the contribution to understanding a *sense of place* by local rural communities. Many issues concerning the local community have been raised in this study without, regrettably, important answers to all the many questions that they pose being provided. This is another of the areas for which further research is needed.

An initial premise behind the research has been that, uninhabited wilderness excepted, settlement and landscape are an indivisible phenomenon. The human activities of the people who live (or have lived) in settlements have also shaped the landscape. Understanding the true nature of this relationship will help overcome many poor planning practices. Planners and developers, for example, need to grasp the idea that spaces between buildings cannot necessarily be built upon without damaging the *sense of place*; or understand that new development should not ignore the grain of the landscape into which it is inserted. Landscape has to accommodate the needs of living people, but this can be done with sensitivity and intelligence once the relationship between settlement and landscape is better understood.

Comprehending the processes behind the evolution of a settlement's morphology should make it possible to more readily design new development in a way that is complementary to existing plan form. Scale and spatial quality, architectural style and form, are characteristics that should influence the siting, design and character of any new development. In some instances an analysis of existing settlement morphology may

indicate that new development in a particular settlement is not desirable, and that essential development would be more appropriately satisfied through the creation of a new settlement, rather than expanding an existing one. Behind these issues resides the idea of an *aesthetic of design*, a topic beyond this study but not far from it.

The methodology used in this study is purposely orientated with the planning process in mind. Hopefully, it has proved to be effective in creating interpretative narratives that are suited to the needs of those concerned with the historical environment: not just managers, planners, developers, but above all the local communities that live within rural settlements. The needs of these communities were one factor behind the adoption of the parish as the unit for these locally orientated studies. From the point of view of creating historical analysis this has not been without its difficulties because of the changes in meaning of the concept of what a parish is over time. If there seems to be an ambiguity in the use and understanding between civil and ecclesiastical parishes, it is because there actually is an ambiguity. This is not only one of terminology, but also concerns usage and understanding — and even today that ambiguity impinges upon the daily life of rural communities.

Some further consideration needs to be given to forthcoming issues that impinge on this study. One obvious factor is that during the final stages of the writing-up of this thesis there was a change of government. The research for the thesis has taken into account the work of the previous, Labour Government, which was still issuing policy documents and official planning guidance up until the calling of the General Election in May 2010. Since the results of that election, the in-coming Coalition Government has indicated a change in emphasis that will need to be evaluated as the full

implications of this unfold over the coming period. For example, it now seems that changes to the definition of 'brown field' sites will make it harder for developers to initiate back-land developments of the type that has affected many rural settlements in recent years. Likewise, the removal of minimum housing densities possibly heralds the return of more spacious housing developments in some rural settings. The change that is awaited with the greatest level of anticipation, perhaps, is to what extent, and in what ways local communities will be given new powers to self-determine decisions on how (and at what rate) their rural settlements develop in the future. Whatever happens, however, it is unlikely that any government is going to rethink the planning system in a radical way — what might more reasonably be expected is an adjustment here or there, the creation of some new powers, the abolition of others and a redirection of the emphasis of some planning law.

There are also some more local perspectives for future research that have arisen in the course of this study. Strangely, areas under the greatest development pressures are often better served in terms of ongoing research than those, like the High Weald, under less pressure. We know more about earlier settlement through archaeological investigation in the Ouse Valley than we do in the Weald because of the greater level of rescue archaeology in the former. It has been suggested that this situation might be partially relieved if more investigation was to be carried out on each of the smaller developments in the High Weald, ones that would not normally qualify for an archaeological pre-development effort⁹. Another area of possible future investigation relates to how the nature, purpose and form of routeways in the High Weald effect the siting of new development. Understanding how

⁹ Derived from personal comments from Dr Nicola Bannister.

routeways perform, and their historical and environmental significance, would help local communities, managers of the historic environment and planners determine their potential. That is, for example, to what extent they might be modified for future usage, whether restrictions on their use by motor vehicles is desirable, and whether they can accommodate further development outside the current expansion areas.

It is worth restating how far thinking on development in rural settlements has shifted since the passing of the Civil Amenities Act in the nineteen-sixties. Then the emphasis was on the *historic* and, against the background of extensive and sometimes insensitive post-war reconstruction, conservationists were happy to settle, it seems, for “islands of conservation in seas of destruction”¹⁰. The publication earlier this year of PPS 5: *Planning for the Historic Environment* demonstrates how attitudes have changed over time — with more emphasis on the value of *historical* elements within every settlement (PPS 5, HE3). Momentum appears at present to be swinging towards a broader appreciation of the historical environment. John Betjeman may have predicted this when he promoted the *Victorian* as worthy despite its ubiquity. In other words, it is quite acceptable to embrace and value the ordinary in a changing world. As Timothy Mowl has put it:

When Betjeman began writing, the nineteenth century accounted for a clear two-thirds of the built environment of the country, this was hugely important. It was like saying ‘Beauty of a cranky nature surrounds everyone already. Enjoy it!’ (Mowl 2000, 11).

Finally, as the quotation from T S Eliot’s *East Coker* suggests, change is continuous and cyclical: tomorrow’s world will always be different in some

¹⁰ Apocryphal.

respects from today's. This is, perhaps even more true as we enter the twenty-first century, than it was in Eliot's day. That contemporary rural communities are potentially subject to vast and seemingly inexorable change in their settlement form should not be seen as its "end". Knowledge will empower change that respects the identity of our living space: as Eliot reminds the reader, every seeming "end" is a new "beginning".

LIST OF PRIMARY SOURCES

PRIMARY SOURCES

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, KEW

Tithe Files

IR18/3502	Benenden Tithe File
IR18/10257	Bodiam Tithe File
IR18/10322	Etchingham Tithe File
IR18/3727	Newenden Tithe File
IR18/3773	Rolvenden Tithe File
IR18/10457	Salehurst Tithe File

BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON ARCHIVES AND RECORD SERVICE

Inclosure Award and Maps

P5/26/1:	Eaton Socon, award and map 1799
P5/26/2&3:	Eaton Socon, valuation and map 1800

Tithe Award and Map

MA 20/1&2:	Eaton Socon 1799
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Estate Maps

GY/1:	Eaton Socon, Bushmead 1624
SQ 113:	Eaton Socon, manor of Basmead 1671-2
Z 931/1:	Eaton Socon, Wilmot Estate 1773
H/WS 925:	Eaton Socon, Whethams Estate 1798

WG 922:	Eaton Socon estate map <i>late 18th century</i>
XI/50:	Eaton Socon <i>survey</i> by Swift 1838
WG 921:	Eaton Socon, Emery Estate map 1841

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL ARCHIVES

Tithe Surveys

DCb/To/B6A&B	Benenden Tithe Apportionments and Map
DCb/To/N3A&B	Newenden Tithe Apportionments and Map
DCb/To/R7A&B	Rolvenden Tithe Apportionments and Map
DCb/To/S7 A&B	Sandhurst Tithe Apportionments and Map

Miscellaneous Documents

U106/V1/3 & 7	Marriage agreement 1629
U15/35/10	Canterbury Cathedral Court Rolls 1639 and 1641
U106/XII/1	Receipt for lands in Rolvenden 1682
U106/XII/2 & 3	Conveyance Benenden & Rolvenden 1693 & 1698

CENTRE FOR KENTISH STUDIES

Tithe Apportionments and Maps, Parish Surveys

P20/27/1:	Benenden parish Survey <i>terrier</i> , 1777
P20/27/2:	Benenden Parish map, by Hodkinson 1777
U49/C13/37:	Benenden, Plan of Parish, 1837
U78 O6:	Benenden: Tithe commutation agreement c.1840
U.749 Z2:	Benenden Parish Plan <i>reference book</i> , 1872
P308/28/1:	Rolvenden Parish Survey 1828

P20/27/3: Rolvenden Tithe Award 1839

Estate and other Maps

U1463/P1 Benenden; Marden, by Redford 1747

U78/P1: Benenden *estate maps* Thomas Hogben 1747

U223/P1: Benenden *estate map* Tho. Hogben 1759

U280/P3: Benenden, Critole Lands 1784

U280/P1: Benenden, School Land Critole, by Rofe 1799

U280/P2: Benenden, Sarnden by Landsell 1807

U1506/P1/1-45: Cranbrook *incl. Benenden*, Pattenden 1622; 1640-50

U280/P3: Cranbrook & Benenden, William Rofe 1784

U469/P2: Hawkhurst & Benenden, Richard Unicume, jn. 1816

U78/P27 & P36: Hempsted Estate *by* Josh. Hodkinson 1779

U78/P27: Hempsted Estate *Rolvenden properties* 1779,

U78/P28: Hempstead Estate Survey, by Thurston 1861

Q/Rum 3: Medway and Rother Canal 1800

U3525/P5: Newenden/Sandhurst, Robert's land, by Budgen 1730

U1823/P67: Newenden, Frogs Barn Farm 1825

U2713/P1: Newenden, Bishop's land 1831

U455 P4: Rolvenden: Marshland 1689

U282 P1-2: Rolvenden: Marshland c1736

U.749/P1: Rolvenden: Kingsgate 1740

U749/P2: Rolvenden, Kingsgate Estate 1743

U409 P18: Rolvenden: *Gatehouse; Bull; Iden; Goford Place* c1750

U409 P17: Rolvenden: Iden Farm 1755

U86.P.19: Rolvenden: Pookwell & Crabhams 1797

P339/27,106-16: Rolvenden: Maytham & Wittersham, by Adams, 1823

U409 P16: Rolvenden: Gatehouse Farm c1830

Q/Rum 2: Rother Navigation 1800

U488/P1: Wittersham, by Tucker 1625

S/Ro P1: Wittersham *includes Maytham House* 1633

Parish and Estate Documents (date order)

TR2896: Jules De Launay *transcription* 1397-1716

U.409.T35-45: The Bull *deeds*, Hussey Papers 1400-1803

TR2896: Jukes de Lannay *and notes* 1464-1781

U24 T278-80: Baker Estate papers (43) 1533-1719

U24 T292, 294: Baker Estate papers (5) 1540-64

U18 T2: Rogley Wood, *deeds*, 1544-1827

U24/T310: Tenterden, Manor of Pettesden, *deeds* 1553

U55 T 20, 21: Hempstead, *papers (Manor of Hempstead)* 1554-1707

U1450/T6/28-35: Denne at Newenden (*et alia*), *deeds* 1556

P264: Newenden Parish Records 1559-1990

TR2243: Rolvenden Parish Registers *transcription* 1558-1812

U24 T287: Baker estate (43) 1563-1711

TR1916/19: Gybbons, Robert *clothmaker, will* 1565

U106 T1/7,13,14: Woodlands (*deeds*) 1583; 1681-2

U214T. 302,3: France Farm *deeds* 1598 – 1761

U24/T355: Newenden, *now* Malpas Lands, *deeds* 1599-1751

U.294T1: The Parsonage, *deeds* 1606-1882

U409/T38: Kadwell, Thomas *deed of settlement etc*, 1610-1699

U.47/11.T.112-3: Nether Foreham, *deeds including map* 1613

U.1159T39: Nether Forsham; Wessell land *deeds* (28a) 1615-1730

U.1575T34: Gibbon, Stephan *will* 1618

U47/11.T 367: Kassingham & Orlovinden *Manor deeds* 1631

U24/T312: Benenden & Biddenden, woodland, *deeds* 1632-1758

U47/34T. 2: Kassingham & Orlovinden, *deeds* 1636 - 1790

U1593 01: Kadwell, George *JP notebook* Hussey Papers 1648-53

U1463: Hempstead Park Estate 1661-1908

Q/R/Th/44r: Newenden Township hearth tax 1664

U1442.Z.1: Poultons, High Street Rolvenden *deeds*. 1677

U991.E.3: Lowden Farm *deeds* 1678-1711

U1823/14 T73: Evernton, Simon, *will* 1679

U409/F1: Kadwell, Thomas *inventory*, Hussey Papers 1680

U78 O9: Benenden, *boundary agreement* 1681

U.24.T.280: Little Halden, *deeds* 1685-1719

U.78.T230-2: The Bull *deeds*, Hussey Papers 1695-1852

U.2701/T1: Chamberlaine, Rev. Thomas *abstract will* 1699-1810

U.765.T5: Farm, *deeds unidentified* 1699

U.78.T276: The Bull, *deeds* Hussey Papers 1700

U409 T73/1-2: Kadwell, George *probate* Hussey Manuscripts 1701

U.1329T.20: Ashbourne Bridge *Land near, deeds* 1708-1826

U502,E1,2: Rolvenden: Tithe & farm accounts 1733-1803

U301.T29: Freebody Farm, Wrens Nest *deeds* 1716-1752

U1304/T27: Lossenham, Old Park, *deeds* 1718-1719

U.1304 T23: Chessenden Farm 65/60 acres, *deeds* 1718-1801

U.1045.T40: Nether Forsam, *deeds* Hussey Papers 1740-1773

U409 T35: Gatehouse, *deeds* Hussey Papers 1680; 1748-1803

U.78.T275: The Bull, *deeds* Hussey Papers 1750

Q/CT1: Rolvenden Hundred, Land Tax Duplicates for 1756/59

U2806/T1,3: Newenden, limekilns, Court Lane, *deeds* 1756-1914

U. 1503.T.6: Farm (*location unknown*) *deeds* 1762

U1304 T20: Hole Park Pt. *Hole Park Estate* 1765-1856

U1304 T15: The Bull Inn *1acre; 2 messuages, deeds* 1767-1908

U.2806T2,3: West Maytham Wharf, *deeds* 1772-1923

U.785,T34(2: Kingsgate, *deeds* 1772-1906

U1304 T2, 3, 4: Hole Park *Pt. Hole Park Estate* 1775-1839

Q/R/P1/325: Newenden land tax assessment 1780-1815, 1817-1832

U2626/T1: Rolvenden messuages, *deeds* 1780-1955

U.1304T7: Merrington Place Farm 68.5 acres, *deeds*, 1782-1845

Q/R/P1/440: Newenden land tax assessment 1798

U.78.T278: The Bull, *deeds*, Hussey Papers 1800

U20/28/2: T. L. Hodges estate, *valuation*, 1801

U24 T4: Cornwaiter, *deeds* 1805-6

P321/28/D4: Newenden marshlands, *deeds*, 1807-1821

U36/T399: Frogsbarn Farm, *deeds* 1808, 1829

U78 T280: Ninevah, *deeds* Forest & Goldsmith (3) 1815-41

U1463 T21: Hempstead Park Estate 1826-58

U78. T.279: Pullington, & Willards Hill (3) *deeds* 1837-43

U1259/T13: Lossenham, Gibbons Land, *deeds* 1837-1851

U654/E6: Lamberden Farm, *sale particulars*, 1841-1883

U78/T328: Bischoppenden Farm, *deeds* 1859

U1463 A1: Hempstead Park Estate *Timber by age and date* 1864

U1588/Z1: Newenden, history, manuscript hand, *date unknown*

Highway Diversion and Stopping- up etc. (date order)

U386/02/3: Newenden Bridge repairs 1637

Q/AB/41-44: Newenden Bridge, reports, orders & bills, 1705-1769

U.1665:0.2: Tenterden Trust, Turnpike Act 1785

Q/RH 3/1: Sandhurst, Field Green to Benenden, Sculls Gate 1790

Q/R/Ut/39: Rolvenden, turnpike papers 1822-1846

Q/RH2/170: Benenden, Tom Watts Lane 1823

Q/RH2/171: Benenden, Stone Rocks lane 1823

Q/RH2/363: Benenden, footpath Hemsted Park 1859

Q/RH2/364: Benenden, Goddards Green/Mount-le-Hoe Farm 1859

Q/RH/365: Benenden, Backtilt Lane 1859

Q/RH2/367: Benenden, lane near Red House Farm 1859

Q/RH2/468: Rolvenden, footpath diversion near village 1872

EAST SUSSEX RECORD OFFICE

Tithe Apportionments and Maps

TD/E99: Bodiam 1839-40

TD/E127: Etchingham 1839-43

TD/E86; Salehurst 1841-43

Estate Maps & Other Plans

ASH/4471: Ashburnham Estate plan, by E & GN Driver 1834

AMS 5691-3-1: Bodiam Manor Lands 1671

AMS 5692-6: Bodiam Manor Lands (Penhurst) 1671

AMS 6454-6-1: Bodiam, Court Lodge 1730

BAT 4435F5: Bodiam, Eldridge land, *date of sale* 1817

BAT 4435F1: Bodiam, Boot & Point Level, date of sale 1817

BAT 4435E5: Bodiam, Castle Level c1817

BAT 4435E2: Bodiam, Ugeham Farm, *date of sale* 1817

AMS 4106-4109: Bodiam, Park Farm c1840

SAS –CO-D-02: Etchingham, Shoyswell Farm 1612

DUN 44/1: Etchingham (Salehurst), Wildigos , by Cogger 1640

AMS 5539: Etchingham, Turses Manor Farm *possibly 17th C*

AMS 4808: Etchingham, Haselden Farm (part), by Jared Hill 1718

AMS 4808/1: Etchingham, Brookgate Farm (part) 1718

AMS 6681-1: Etchingham, Kitchenham & Birkham Farms 1754

AMS6526: Etchingham, Short-Ridge by Budgen 1765

SAS/HC 347: Etchingham, Great Boarzell (part) 1821

AMS 6454/2/1: Etchingham, Barnhurst 1861

AMS 6681/2: Railway plan: Salehurst & Etchingham *date unknown*

ASH 4409A/B/C: Rother Canal (x3 plans) 1813

ACC 6732-2: Salehurst, Iridge Place 1637

AMS 5691-3-4: Salehurst, Robertsbridge (part) 1671

AMS 5765/1: Salehurst (pt Bodiam), Great Wigsell 1685

AMS 5860: Salehurst, Parsonage Farm 1714

AC 2844: Salehurst, Merriments Farm, by Redford 1728

ACC 6732-3: Salehurst, Greens, Knights, Home, Cruttenden 1750

MIC 50-07: Salehurst, Jolly's Farm c 1750

MIC 50/3: Salehurst, Millwood 1756

AMS 5374: Salehurst, Boresnest Farm 1770

MIC 50/4: Salehurst, Sewlands 1772

MIC 50/15: Salehurst, Church Farm 1776

ACC 4728-01: Salehurst, Rotherbridge Manor 1782

ACC 3491: Salehurst, Bugzel Forge Farm, by Snepp 1787

ACC 6732-4: Salehurst, Climsetts & Whatmans Farms 1799

MIC 50/8: Salehurst, Squibs Farm c1760

MIC 50-16: Salehurst, Great Wigsell and other farms 1802

ALF/5/28: Salehurst, Silver-Hill Estate 1803

ACC 6732-5: Salehurst, Beech House Farm 1805

BAT 4435C5: Salehurst, Browns Farm, *date of sale* 1817

BAT 4435D3: Salehurst, land in Robertsbridge, *date of sale* 1817

BAT 4435E1: Salehurst, Redlands Farm, *date of sale* 1817

BAT 4435D4: Salehurst, Park Farm, *date of sale* 1817

BAT 4435D5: Salehurst, Abbey Farm, *date of sale* 1817

BAT 4481: Salehurst, Little Shoulder of Mutton Field 1818

ALF/9/7-8: Salehurst, plan of lane - church to Abbey House 1821

ACC 6732-6: Salehurst, parcel of land 1824

AMS 5372: Salehurst, Little Wigsell 1824

MIC 50-02: Salehurst, Stockwell Farm 1826

MIC 50/12: Salehurst, Rosehill Farm, by Hilder 1827

AMS 5374: Salehurst, Browns Farm 1831

AMS 5375: Salehurst Highams Farm 1831

AMS 5376: Salehurst, Ockham Farm 1831

MIC 50/10: Salehurst, Brooklands Farm 1833

SAS-AN/224: Salehurst, Vinehall Estate 1859

BMW/C/25/6: Salehurst, Ockham Farm 1898

CHR/18/9: Staple, hundred map 1788

AMS 6008/1/1/3: Sussex, county map by Morden 1701

AMS 6008/1/1/4: Sussex, county map by Andrews & Dury 1777

AMS 6008/1/1/14: Sussex county map by Greenwood 1823/4

ACC 2806-1-09-02: Wittersham Levels by Gier & Cogger 1633

Parish and Estate Documents (date order)

AMS 6526: Beechings in Etchingham, *deeds* 1710

BAT/4437/8: Battle Estate papers 1811

ASH/2365: Turnpike road, proposed through Salehurst, 1812

BAT/2122/3: Robertsbridge estate *sale particulars* 1814

BAT/2124: Battle Estate, *sale particulars* 1817

AMS 1410: Newhouse, Etchingham *sale particulars* 1850

AMS 6454/4: Beckwith, Seacox Heath Estate, Etchingham 1859

ACC 6790/94: Salehurst, various, *inventories/tenants rights* 1878/93

E/LS/011: Land in Salehurst & Brightling *conveyance* 1879

AMS 6209/1/100-1: Seacox Heath Estate, *sale particulars* 1947

C/C/45/8/61: Hurst Green, order creating new parish 1952

AMS 6174/4: Iridge New Estate, *sale particulars* 1955

AMS 6384/1: Old Shoyswell Manor & Turzes Farms *sale* 1982

AMS 6384/77: Socknersh Manor, Etchingham, *sale particulars* 2002

HUNTINGDONSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

Inclosure Awards

CCS 42: Abbotsley 1838

CCS 9: Bluntisham-cum-Earith, Colne 1820

45/26/1: Brampton 1775

CCS 40: Buckden 1820

CCS 5: Diddington 1799

603/2: Earith 1820

CCS 12; Eynesbury 1800

603/3: Fenstanton 1811

CCS 6; Godmanchester 1809

CCS 1: Hartford 1772

CCS 6: Hemingford Abbots 1806

CCS 6:	Hemingford Grey 1806
CCS 10:	Hilton 1840
603/3:	Holywell-cum-Needingworth 1803
CCS 1:	Houghton-cum-Wyton 1775
CCS 8:	Offord Cluny 1803
CCS 3:	Offord Darcy 1811
CCS2;	Oldhurst 1803
CCS 8:	Great Paxton with Toseland 1811
CCS 3:	Little Paxton 1814
CCS 1:	Kings Ripton 1773
CCS 6:	St Ives 1808
CCS 27:	St Neots 1771
CCS 5:	Southoe 1799
HP64/26/1:	Toseland 1818 (<i>with plan</i>)
CCS 11:	Woodhurst 1802

Inclosure Maps

PM 1/1:	Abbotsley 1838
PM 1/7:	Bluntisham-cum-Earith 1814
PM 1/8:	Brampton 1772
PM 1/12:	Buckden 1813
PM 2/1a:	Diddington 1797

PM 1/7:	Earith 1814
Map 3425:	Eaton Socon 1799
PM 2/6:	Eynesbury 1799
PM 2/7:	Fenstanton 1810
PM 2/12:	Godmanchester 1803
PM 2/18:	Hartford 1771
PM 2/19:	Hemingford Abbots 1801
PM 2/20:	Hemingford Grey 1801
PM 2/21:	Hilton 1840
PM 2/23:	Holywell-cum-Needingworth 1803
PM 2/24:	Houghton-cum-Wyton <i>draft</i> 1773
SM 9/63:	Houghton-cum-Wyton 1774
PM 3/8:	Offord Cluny 1800
PM 3/9:	Offord Darcy 1811
PM 3/11:	Oldhurst 1803
PM 3/15:	Great Paxton with Toseland 1811
PM 3/16:	Little Paxton 1814-2
PM 4/3:	St Ives 1808
LR 16/352:	St Neots 1770 (draft)
Map 111:	Southoe <i>no date</i>

Tithe Maps and Apportionments

TLR 380:	Bluntisham-cum-Earith 1844
Map 310:	Brampton 1841-2
2196/14:	Eynesbury for Weald, <i>apportionment</i> 1839, <i>map</i> 1837
2196/14a&B:	Eynesbury for Caldecote, 1839
2196/24:	Hilton 1839
2196/26:	Holywell-cum-Needingworth 1851
SM13/90:	Kings Ripton 1850
2196/33:	Little Paxton 1850
2110/15/24:	Offord Darcy, <i>plan</i> 1794

Estate Maps

LR 17/354:	Boughton Hamlet c1800
Acc 223:	Brampton, Sandwich Estate 1757
Map 25:	Brampton Park Estate 1813
Map 23:	Brampton Park Estate, <i>village & park</i> 1820
Map 24:	Brampton Park Estate, <i>roads & footpaths</i> 1820
Map 31:	Brampton Park Estate, by Lovell 1834
LR6/319:	Diddington, Thornhill Estate 1808
TLR 379/1:	Diddington, Thornhill Estate 18059
Map 193:	Diddington, by Bloodworth 1859
Map 141:	Eaton Socon, Reynolds Estate c1841

Map 163:	Eaton Socon, Cross Hall Estate 1844
H25/26/2-3:	Eynesbury, parish map by Baxter 1800
Map 47:	Fenstanton, Brown's manorial estate 1777
LR8/324:	Godmanchester, River Ouse waterways (<i>copy</i>) 1514
MC 6/1:	Godmanchester, town map 1853
PM 6/8:	Great Paxton, St John's College Farm 1792
Map 58:	Hartford, Lady Sparrow's Estate 1869
Map 187:	Hilton, plan of village green 1778
PM6/1:	Hilton, St John's College Farm 1790
PM2/22:	Holywell, Manchester Estate 1764
Map 92:	Holywell-cum-Needingworth, fire damage 1847
Map 62:	Houghton-cum-Wyton, Lady Sparrow's Estate 1820
Map 102:	Little Paxton, Reynolds property 1841
Map 170/A:	Midloe Farm 1800
Map 467/A:	Midloe, lordship map 1801
5/09/47:	Offord Darcy, manorial estate 1857
M188:	St Ives, Edmund Pettis Map 1728
M 189/A:	St Ives, town plan 1728
M233:	St Neots, Anderson Estate 1757
M223/13-18:	St Neots, Sandwich Estate 1757
2029/9:	St Neots, Monk's Hardwick c1809

LR 16/374: St Neots, Meadow enclosure plan 1815

Map 110: St Neots, valuation map 1859

Map 111/17: Southoe, Stanley Estate 1801

M1160: Southoe, Pointer Estate 1801

Map 194: Woodhurst, Pelly Estate 1865

SUFFOLK RECORD OFFICE (Ipswich)

HA43 T501/242: Hemsted Park, Benenden *Estate map* 1599

OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES

Ordnance Survey Maps

The following Ordnance Survey maps were made available electronically for the parishes in both study areas by EDINA:

1. County Series 1:10560 1846-1969
 - a. 1st edition 1849-1899
 - b. 1st revision 1888-1914
 - c. 2nd revision 1900-1949
 - d. 3rd revision 1922-1969
2. County Series 1:2500 1854-1949
 - a. 1st edition 1855-1901
 - b. 1st revision 1893-1915
 - c. 2nd revision 1906-1939
 - d. 3rd revision 1924-1949

RAF 1945-49 Aerial Survey

Huntingdonshire mosaics supplied by Huntingdonshire Record Office

Kent mosaics supplied by the Kent HER

OTHER SOURCES

Heritage Environment Records

The heritage environment records for Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough, Cambridgeshire, East Sussex and Kent were consulted.

The following records were obtained as a matter of course:

1. The archaeological record of excavations and finds;
2. Listed Buildings and scheduled ancient monuments;
3. Historic Landscape Characterisation

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APPENDICES

A: The SPAB Manifesto and Building Conservation Practice

B: Notes on Ecclesiastical and Civil Parishes

C: Notes on Landholding and the Land Market in Kent

D: Notes on the Sources of Evidence for the Wealden Parishes

E: Overview of the Early Settlement History of the Eastern High Weald

F: Tithe Survey Statistics for Parishes in the Study Area

G: Notes on Conservation Area Assessment: The Hemingfords

H: The Hemingfords' Conservation Area Character Assessment (document on separate CD)

APPENDIX A:

THE SPAB MANIFESTO AND BUILDING CONSERVATION PRACTICE

The SPAB Manifesto reflected the views of one end of the spectrum in the contemporary nineteenth-century debate about the treatment of historic buildings (sometimes known as the ‘scrape and anti-scrape’ debate). This debate was characterised by the strengths and weaknesses of the perspectives from which it was drawn – and it was both an immoderate and protracted wrangle. The founding of SPAB effectively closed this episode without, arguably, resolving the disagreements at the core of the dispute. Simplistically, the argument was between the Restorers who saw ancient or historic buildings as legitimate material for fulfilling a contemporary need and those, opposed to Restoration, who viewed such buildings as cultural objects to be preserved as statements of past achievements for the enlightenment of contemporary and future generations.

However, the results of the process of modifying existing buildings for continued use were often intrusive and in some cases so intrusive that the original was completely remodelled. It was this extreme activity that fired up the ‘anti-scrape’ party to be intolerant of all such interventions. The destruction of original material that frequently accompanied structural rescue became for many an unacceptable attack on these ancient national monuments. Indeed John Ruskin (a mentor of William Morris) in his *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) stated:

Neither by the public, nor by those who have the care of public monuments, is the true meaning of the word restoration understood. It means the most total destruction which a building can suffer: a destruction out of which no remnant can be gathered: a destruction accompanied with false descriptions of the thing they have destroyed. Do not let us deceive ourselves in this important matter; it is impossible, as impossible as to raise the dead, to restore anything that has ever been great or beautiful in architecture. (Earl 1996, 40 - quoting Ruskin).

There were many examples of the kind of destruction to which Ruskin and his disciples were so ardently opposed. Two well known examples were St Alban's Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey: the latter because Gilbert Scott's plan for it was the direct cause of Morris's letter calling for an association to protest against all "restoration"; and the former because it demonstrates the complexity behind the 'scrape – anti-scrape' debate.

The Abbey Church of St Albans in Hertfordshire was a large and venerable church that was being promoted as a candidate for cathedral status, at a time when new dioceses were being created as the Anglican Church expanded with nineteenth-century population growth. The work commenced in 1856 under the direction of George Gilbert Scott (1811 – 1878) with the stabilisation of the tower and nave walls. The tower, in fact, had been undermined at the time of the Reformation and was on the point of collapse. The nave walls were 40 inches out of alignment and needed to be hydraulically stabilised before they could safely sustain its roof (Perkins 1903). Gilbert Scott's work was principally designed to stabilise the building (Pickard 1996, 142) and it was not until Lord Grimthorpe took responsibility for the work after Gilbert Scott's death that the building was extensively remodelled in the fashion so detested by Ruskin and Morris.

Under Grimthorpe's direction a number of significant buildings associated with the church were demolished and, contentiously, the West Front was rebuilt in an earlier style¹. It is interesting that the most intrusive and destructive phase of the restoration of St Alban's Cathedral took place after George Gilbert Scott's death, although this did not prevent opprobrium to be cast upon him by Morris. There is no doubt that Scott saw himself as a responsible restorer, even though in his *On the Conservation of Architectural Monuments and Remains* (1864) he admitted that he himself had over-restored on occasions². But in his publication *General Advice to Promoters of the Restoration of Ancient Buildings* (1865) his approach seems impeccable³.

Scott the avid recorder of buildings was part of a tradition going back to the seventeenth century⁴. In 1780, the Society of Antiquities (founded 1707) engaged John Carter, a well-respected surveyor of buildings, to evaluate the work of those responsible for the restoration of medieval buildings. In 1795 Carter published *The Ancient Architecture of England* in which he intended to 'inform those embarked on insensitive restorations of medieval buildings the true character of medieval architecture'. In particular

¹ Morris' criticism, however, as set out in the SPAB Manifesto was based on the lack of any originality in the Restorers' styles and their copying of ones frequently earlier than the architecture they removed. Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Manifesto of William Morris, Founder, 1877, (current edition undated).

² For example, he had demolished the seventeenth century chapel at Exeter College, Oxford to make way for a design of his own c. 1860.

³ G. G. Scott advocated careful drawings with accurate measurements; photographs prior to archaeological investigation; the retention of recorded finds; preservation of ancient surface treatments; careful cleaning and consolidation of masonry in preference to replacement.

⁴ For example, Wren produced detailed reports on Old St Paul's, Westminster Abbey and Salisbury Cathedral.

Carter criticised the work of James Wyatt (1746-1813) who carried out improvements to a number of English cathedrals (including Hereford, Lichfield, Salisbury and Durham) in such a sensitive manner that he became known as the “destroyer” (Abbott 2002).

From the 1830s members of the Cambridge Camden Society⁵ (renamed the Ecclesiological Society in 1845), enthusiastically promoted Wyatt’s legacy. The Camden Society was an Anglican movement whose members espoused the medieval enthusiasms of Pugin, especially his admiration for the fourteenth century. In 1849 their publication *The Ecclesiologist* suggested that:

To restore a building is to revive the original appearance...lost by decay or accident or ill-judged restoration... we must, whether from existing evidence or from supposition, recover the original edifice.

It is not difficult to understand why there was an uncompromising reaction against such views by those sensitive to such rough treatment of the Nation’s historic monuments⁶. Morris’s Manifesto was a rejection of all forms of restoration and his solution for the protection of historic buildings is set out in the Manifesto’s penultimate paragraph:

⁵ The Camden Society was the Cambridge equivalent of the Oxford Movement, although the latter was focused more on the restoration of Catholic sacramental theology in the Church of England.

⁶ In fact such views were not only those of restorers in this country. In 1837 the French Government set up the *Commission des Monuments Historiques* and appointed Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc as its first Director. He was considered by many to be France’s leading medieval scholar and architectural theorist, but he was also a committed restorer. In 1866 he wrote: *To restore a building is to re-establish it to a completed state which may never have existed at any particular time.*

It is for all these buildings, therefore, of all times and styles, that we plead, and call upon those who have to deal with them to put Protection in the place of Restoration, to stave off decay by daily care, to prop a perilous wall or mend a leaky roof by such means as are obviously meant for support or covering, and show no pretence of other art, and otherwise to resist all tampering with either the fabric or ornament of the building as it stands; if it has become inconvenient for its present use, to raise another building rather than alter or enlarge the old one; in fine to treat our ancient buildings as monuments of a bygone art, created by bygone manners, that modern art cannot meddle with without destroying. (The Builder 1877)

But this ignored the reality that by the closing years of the eighteenth century and the opening years of the nineteenth many of our finest monuments (and particularly the great churches) were in such a poor state of preservation that only major (engineering) intervention could preserve them as whole buildings. Morris's eloquence and the directness and simplicity of the message, however, eventually carried the day and it was this philosophy that formed the basis for the modern building conservation movement.

Despite its persuasive eloquence, the Manifesto did not provide the level of practical advice needed to implement the philosophy proposed. SPAB soon refined the philosophy into the following tenets:

1. Repair rather than restoration;
2. Repairs should be carried out in a simple and workmanlike way. Any combination of new and old materials should be honestly shown. No attempts should be made to artificially age materials or replace features that are missing;
3. Only tried and tested materials and methods of repair should be used on old buildings;
4. All repairs should be reversible;
5. Any repairs which compromise the integrity of a building should be avoided.

Finally, under the influence of Phillip Webb, the architect, the SPAB Committee added a further permission (rather in the teeth of the original Manifesto!):

Additions to old buildings to be carried out only as a last resort. If essential, they should be kept to a minimum and designed in response to the old building; to complement rather than parody.

By polarising the debate SPAB rather overlooked any positive aspects of the work of the Restorers and promoted a very narrow form of conservationism that supported the maintenance of individual buildings, with an emphasise on traditional craft techniques, regardless of the circumstance. SPAB did not address either the broader issues of a building within the built environment (particularly how buildings relate together and the ‘genius of place’) or the relationship of use to contemporary need.

It is as if the religious, as well as the aesthetic fervour out of which the Manifesto was conceived has conferred on it the status of a scriptural doctrine; a sentiment which has survived into the modern age. What was lost to the conservation movement was the balance of professional architects like Sir George Gilbert Scott who, for all his faults, represented a robustness of approach to the contemporary requirements of his own age. It did not become respectable to raise issues of re-use and restoration for the best part of a century (Latham 2000).

In 1877 when William Morris first promulgated his Manifesto the issues may have seemed unambiguous. He and many of the other anti-scrappers were appalled at the urbanisation of the country at large and the loss of the rural idyll. They were suspicious of the impact of science and the

new technologies and dreamt of holding back the tide of modernity. The preservation of ancient buildings from Restorers and other promoters of change looked attractive and possible.

If Sir George Gilbert Scott came to represent the despised Restorers, then his death in 1878 perhaps symbolises the eventual demise of the concept of Victorian Restoration. However, professional architects in the mould of Gilbert Scott were also the people who championed the recording of historic buildings, archaeological investigation, the study of design and the history of architecture.

APPENDIX B:

ECCLESIASTICAL AND CIVIL PARISHES

PARISH AND TOWNSHIP DISCUSSED

The modern civil parish grew out of the secular administrative responsibilities given to local communities within existing ecclesiastical parishes from the sixteenth century. This process culminated in the Local Government Act of 1894 (56 & 57 Vict. c. 73), which established the civil parish as it has come down to us. The modern civil parish remains the mainstay for community focus within contemporary rural communities, and important to those presently concerned with the future development of the rural environment. However, the geographical area over which particular parishes extend, the alignment of many parish boundaries and even the meaning and context of the term itself has changed over time and this needs to be examined and explained. Linked to the idea of the parish, as a local area of administration, is that of the vill or township. Now rather archaic, the *township* was an important unit of local administration at the time that much of the present day settlement pattern in the southern part of the country, at least, was evolving and the term has a special place in any discussion about historic settlement morphology.

The modern idea of the civil parish started to develop during the course of the sixteenth century, particularly in relation to vagrancy and the relief of the poor. Vagrancy, in particular, had become a growing problem after the Black Death when during the course of the fifteenth century many landlords sought to enclose arable lands for pasture and in the process reduced their tenants to landless paupers (Birtles, 2003, p100-107). This

process of enclosure continued into the sixteenth century and following the dissolution of the monasteries, which had up to that time largely provided the safety net for the poorest in society, the Tudor Government was forced to act. Under the Poor Law Acts of the sixteenth century, responsibility for the poor was given to secular officers chosen from within a parish and local justices of the peace supervised the whole process (Oxley 1974; Slack 1990). Over the same period many of the functions of the local manorial courts were also transferred to the Parish Vestry (for example the appointment of the parish constable and, by an Act of 1555, the Overseer of Highways [Hey (ed) 1998, 218]) or the Justices of the Peace (for example, the enforcement of social and lesser criminal law) [Hey (ed) 1998, 253]. Parishes, however, had in the first place been purely ecclesiastical institutions, separate from local secular administration that was grounded in the manor, township (see below) and Hundred. The significant point is that the geographical area of the ecclesiastical parish was (initially at least) identical to the administrative area over which these new civil responsibilities were exercised. Although there were to be many changes to the boundaries, number and extent of (civil) parishes over the ensuing years, these changes have not, in most cases, seriously disrupted the historical continuity and it is that factor which gives the parish its appeal as the best unit of analysis for a study of this kind¹.

The origins of the parish rest in the organisation of ecclesiastical units of pastoral and fiscal administration that are found within the medieval

¹ There are some notable exceptions to this general rule. In particular (as it affects this study) is the case of the modern parish of Hurst Green, in East Sussex. This parish was created out of parts of two adjoining parishes in the nineteen-fifties and hence has no medieval ecclesiastical predecessor.

diocesan church (Blair (ed) 1988, 1-21; Morris 1989, 128-139)². In the tenth and eleventh centuries this was organised principally through a network of minster churches (superior or *ealdan mynstres*) with a *parochiae* usually much wider than later parishes and to which people owed their tithes. In their origins these minsters were related to monasteries of professed monks living in community under a specific rule that emphasised the importance of a vocational life based on the Daily Office. However, minster churches tended to be served by secular priests or canons whom, although living in community, were not subject to the compulsory threefold monastic discipline of celibacy, poverty and obedience. By 1014³ there were four grades of church of which the minster (in the above sense) was second only to the Bishop's own *cathedra*⁴. The *parochiae* of these minsters were often aligned with the area of a Hundred and located at or near a royal vill and almost invariably had their own graveyards. Minsters were frequently well provided with generous endowments that normally consisted of between one to five hides, but could be more (Rushton 1999, 137)⁵. These minsters were historically founded by royal, episcopal, or comital acts or at the instigation of the wealthier thegns.

The Aethelredian statute of 1014 hints at the growth of private churches that were being endowed from at least the late tenth century.

² Local Church is used here in the Catholic (and medieval) sense of a 'self-governing' church under a bishop within the universal communion of the Universal Church.

³ Defined in the Law of 8 Aethelred 5.1.

⁴ The churches specified were the Head Minster (cathedral church), the *ealdan* minster, the church (*cirice*) – privately owned but with a graveyard and usually with one priest, and the chapel (*feldcircan*) – a local private church without a graveyard (Morris 1989, 129).

⁵ This is demonstrated in the Domesday entry for Paxton, in Huntingdonshire, where the church holds a full hide. This is possible corroboration of the church's earlier status as a minster church (Morris 1975, 20/8).

Increasingly lesser lay lords became involved in the establishment of local churches, particularly as the manorial system developed from the late ninth to the mid eleventh century when the “complex estates and territories based on royal, ecclesiastical or aristocratic centres fragmented into self-contained manors, the land-base of a broader thegnly class” (Blair 1988, 7). This led to more investment in church building than may have otherwise been possible, but also to smaller parishes that increasingly coincided with the territory of local manors. As churches proliferated and existing churches (in particular the ancient minsters) attempted to assert their rights the medieval parochial system consolidated and the founding of new parishes became more difficult⁶ – by 1200 the majority of later medieval parishes had been established (Blair 1988, 10-13). Thus parish boundaries became fixed and started to form an institutional framework within which township and manorial boundaries could be rationalised. The scene was set for the legislative innovations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that resulted in the establishment of the civil parish. From that time the civil parish started to diverge from its ecclesiastical origins, both in terms of its secular administrative powers but also frequently geographically as well. Thus, for example, in Huntingdonshire there are chapelries that have been subject to their mother churches from medieval times whilst becoming civil parishes in their own right later⁷. Elsewhere, some new civil parishes have been created within rural areas that have no medieval antecedents – an

⁶ Not infrequently early minsters had established subsidiary churches within their boundaries, chapelries dependent on the mother church. On occasions these became separate parishes, but frequently remained as dependent churches. Chapelries could, and were, built within a parochial territory later in the Middle Ages although many didn’t survive – see chapter 7.

⁷ An example is Toseland that was founded as a Chapelry within the minster parochiae of Paxton and has remained ecclesiastically dependent whilst gaining full civil parish status by the local government Act of 1894.

example would be Hurst Green in the High Weald of East Sussex (established in about 1953) – such creations are unusual in rural areas but where they occur can disrupt the evaluation of the continuity of settlement morphology.

The role that the civil parish came to fulfil in defining rural communities is, as we have seen, a relatively modern idea. In places like the Huntingdonshire Ouse Valley where the township and the manor were frequently coterminous within a single ecclesiastical parish from the twelfth century, a straightforward relationship between individual settlements and their parish evolved naturally into a local unit similar to the modern parish. However, the situation was not as clear-cut in the High Weald where manorial holdings were often dispersed and complex, frequently lacking the same authority over the enrolment of tenure enjoyed by manorial courts elsewhere, and this tended to weaken manorial influence in these areas⁸. In the Kent High Weald parish boundaries did not necessarily relate well to those of the hundred, which made a simple transfer of administrative functions from one to the other more difficult than in Sussex, where the Hundreds tended to have a better correspondence to parish boundaries and the parishes had superseded the hundreds for such purposes as the land tax assessments by the seventeenth century. Furthermore, as settlement morphology was very dispersed in both counties it seems to have proved difficult to group habitation into easily identifiable, named townships as happened elsewhere. In Kent, for example, the High Weald hundreds were divided not into townships but ‘quarters’ of loose groupings of farmsteads

⁸ In the Sussex High Weald there were some powerful and extensive manorial holdings, as well as a large number of smaller manors, but generally they were stronger than those on the Kent side.

and hamlets with no clearly defined boundaries (in Sussex, usually called 'tithings' or 'boroughs'), which system seemed better suited to cope with the particular set of circumstances found there. This diversity of usage is respected in this study where the idea of *township* sits more comfortably with the settlement morphology of the Ouse Valley than the settlement morphology of the Rother Valley and the term is mainly used in the analysis of Huntingdonshire rural settlement.

The term *township*, the Latin *villa*, is found in the Domesday Book and other medieval documents indicating identifiable settlements. A township had a recognised standing in public law (Dodgshon 1980, 108-113), although as Maitland pointed out it was peculiar in not having a tribunal of its own, relying either on a manorial court or that of the Hundred (Maitland 1911, 84-95). How medieval townships actually worked is somewhat elusive but as enduring territorial units they are important to our understanding of the distribution and identification of early settlement and potentially for settlement continuity. The location of Domesday townships in Huntingdonshire correspond well with what is known of settlement distribution from later sources (see Chapter 7) and seem less prone to some of the problems of identification that can be encountered elsewhere. The fission of many Domesday townships in twelfth century Huntingdonshire, which led to the creation of new townships, can be traced with relative ease even though the actual mechanism is often obscure (Dodgshon 1980, 108-119). However, Domesday settlements do not show up particularly well in the High Weald, although Sussex is better documented than Kent both in the eleventh century and later in the medieval period, for reasons that will be discussed later.

Although the term township is used in this study throughout for the Domesday vill (as well as for places recorded in later documents) it remains a difficult concept, particularly for the non-expert, as words containing *town* may suggest that such settlements had an urban aspect, which most townships did not in fact have. *Village* is more rural, but tends to be associated with a quintessential image of greens, a manor house and the church in juxtaposition – although during the course of fieldwork it was noted that in the greatly dispersed settlement parishes of the Weald the term was frequently used to denote the area covered by the whole parish rather than a particular group of buildings within it⁹. The *quarters* and *tithings* of the Kent and East Sussex High Weald hundreds are now something of an anachronism and are not really an alternative to the use of the word *township* found elsewhere. However, the difficulties associated with the use and understanding of these terms is more troublesome for the student of medieval settlement, where the main focus is principally on this earlier phase of settlement morphology. For the purposes of this work, concerned as much with later morphology as that of earlier times, the civil parish as a way of conceptualising rural settlement remains reassuringly available.

The parish as a unit for study, however, is not without its difficulties. First, its size is very variable even within the same sub-region, so that (for example) parishes within the Ouse Valley can vary from about two thousand acres upwards to about seven thousand acres. Of course, parishes can be very much larger and more complex; in the north of England, for example, much larger parishes were common in the Middle Ages (in some

⁹ Personal comments by High Weald parish residents during the course of the fieldwork.

instances between 50,000 to 80,000 acres), usually broken down into townships with chapelries (Winchester 2000, 25); later, these often became civil parishes in their own right. Even in the south of England parishes often had subdivisions, possibly of some antiquity, so that parishes in the High Weald were sub-divided into either *tithings* (in Sussex), or *boroughs* (in Kent). Modern civil parishes tend to be fairly compact, but in the past there have been many cases of settlements territorially surrounded in one parish forming an 'outlier' belonging to another; occasionally parishes extended over county boundaries, or had outliers in the different county (for a more detailed overview of the variety of parochial arrangements, see Winchester 1990). These are not insuperable problems and, for example, the bigger parishes with chapelries in Huntingdonshire did not prove difficult to fit into the parochial analysis adopted. However, it is recognised that some adjustments might need to be made to the methodology in different areas of the country.

The advantages of the parish as a unit of analysis greatly outweigh any disadvantages. Parishes typically demarcate the limits of much local socio-economic activity of the type associated with historic settlement morphology, although the relationship may be complex and indirect. For example, although the parish is (or was) not a totally self-contained unit, it was historically more than simply an administrative unit. However, a number of parishes can be built up into sub-regional groupings where both the differences and similarities can be appreciated. The detailed results of the fieldwork in both study areas in this study depends on the parish as the basic unit of analysis, and sub-regional groupings have been constructed using them as building blocks.

APPENDIX C:

LANDHOLDING AND THE LAND MARKET IN KENT

Living at a time when we are accustomed to one national system of law, it is surprising to discover some of the local variations, or customs, that existed in many parts of the country in the past. These often have passing relevance in contrast to the almost ubiquitous establishment of the Common Law relating to land during the post Conquest period; except in Kent where the Custom of Gavelkind became formally enshrined in law at the very time that similar custom was being ousted almost everywhere else (Everitt 1986, 336-337). Some of the reasons (and the effects of this) are explored below.

Issues of landholding in the Weald were complicated because the law concerning the inheritance and alienation of land in the Weald differed in Sussex and Kent. In that part of Sussex within the study area land was subject to the ordinary common law¹, whilst in the Kentish parishes most land was subject to the Custom of Kent – the law of Gavelkind². These differences are potentially important as they may affect the size of holdings and tenurial relationships. There is a perceived wisdom that partible

¹ However, as Jolliffe has pointed out, gavelkind was found in parts of East Sussex in areas adjacent to the study area, although it is not certain how long the practice lasted (Jolliffe 1962, 74-76).

² The rules and privileges of gavelkind custom were enrolled before the Eyre of 21 Edward I, under the title *Constitutiones Cancie*, 1292/3.

inheritance of the kind fostered by Gavelkind produced smaller and smaller holdings that became increasingly unsustainable, but no evidence was found for this in the study and this view is in keeping with Jolliffe (Jolliffe 1962, 24). However, Gavelkind may have helped weaken the Kentish manorial system for the reasons given below.

Gavelkind was ubiquitous in Kent from early on, especially amongst traditional peasant holdings (Jolliffe 1962, 27-30) – although after the Conquest it did not apply to Knights' Fees, and we find that the owners of large estates were disgavelling their land by Act of Parliament from the late medieval period onwards (Baker 1990, 305). Gavelkind determined the way land was inherited and managed until late into the 18th century (at least) and was not abolished until 1926 (Baker 1990, 304). Under Gavelkind land could be devised by will and the owner of the tenure could alienate land, that is, devise or otherwise sell or dispose of it without redress to the manorial court: in this sense Gavelkind holdings were comparable to the modern freehold (Lambarde 1576, 7). In general terms holders of gavel land were free of the customary labour services that marked out villain tenure elsewhere, and in Kent the manorial court could not distrain on the land for lack of service or non-payment of rent (Jolliffe 1962, 37). In all these respects the holder of Gavelkind land enjoyed considerable freedom. The main differences between the two systems is summarised in Table 1, below.

Table 1: Main Distinctions in Tenure of lands in Gavelkind & at Common Law³

	The Common Law of Kent	The Common Law of England
Descent	To all the sons or heirs male, equally.	The eldest son, or heir male, by primogeniture.
Alienation	By an infant heir, or tenant in Gavelkind, at the age of fifteen years.	At the age of twenty-one years.
Dower	The widow is endowed of a moiety of her deceased husband's Gavelkind lands for life, but this estate ceases upon a second marriage.	The widow is endowed of one-third part of her deceased husband's lands during her life.
Courtesy	The widower has one moiety of his late wife's Gavelkind lands (whether there be issue or not), but this estate ceases upon a second marriage.	The widower takes the whole of his deceased wife's lands for his life, if there has been issue of the marriage; otherwise he takes nothing.
Will	Gavelkind lands have always been devisable by will.	Lands not generally devisable by will till the statutes 32, 34 and 35 Hen. VIII whereby two-thirds of lands in chivalry, and the whole of the socage lands, become devisable. And by stat. 12 Car. II military tenures converted into common socage, and the whole became devisable by will.

A consequence of these practices was to ensure that land was frequently available for purchase or rent as multiple-inheritors of small parcels of land frequently chose to dispose of it, or rent it out, in order to capitalise some other venture or provide an additional income (Short 1984, 295). This created a very free land market that enabled individuals from even fairly humble origins to build up landholdings; whereby, in many instances an artisan became a husbandman and a husbandman a yeoman, and a gentleman or merchant became a substantial landowner (Chester-Kadwell 2004, 59-64).

In the Kentish High Weald in particular the manorial system was weak – partly because much of it had formed the 'outlands' of the

³ Based on Charles Sandys, *A History of Gavelkind and Other Remarkable Customs in the County of Kent*, London, 1851, pp 92-3

established Saxon estates to the north and east of the county, which during the course of the Middle Ages became detached completely or were only peripheral to the later manorial hegemony. However, tenure by gavelkind, where the hundred courts guaranteed the right of tenure, also ensured that the manorial court's jurisdiction remained limited. Additionally, the right of alienation without the sanction of the manorial court to which the tenure was technically attached also weakened the system and for detached elements especially keeping accurate records of who was responsible for paying manorial rents became increasingly difficult. During the period of this study landowners at common law were attempting to establish ways of ensuring their legal title to land within a rather antiquated system inherited from the Middle Ages, and at the same time establish their ability to acquire or alienate their lands and pass them on to their descendants by will. They were, of course, also interested in defending their interest in land and the profit to be gained from letting it to their tenants as well (Simpson 1986, 47-80 & 208-212). Gavelkind provided for these outcomes and its utility did not go unnoticed, little surprise that it survived until common law land rights caught up.

APPENDIX D:

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE FOR THE WEALDEN PARISHES

Archaeological as well as documentary records are particularly thin for the High Weald prior to the eleventh century (with the exception of a number of Saxon charters) and remains poor until the twelfth or thirteenth centuries after which much more is known about Wealden settlement generally. This is partly because the archaeological record is more abundant (major buildings were now being constructed in stone and the habitation elements of settlement were taking on more recognisable morphology), but also because more activities were better documented with an improved survival rate of the written material.

Local estate plans and land terriers occurred in every parish and became more numerous from the middle years of the seventeenth century. All parishes had their own collection, although there are a greater number of estate plans for farms and other holdings in the Sussex parishes; this may follow the stronger manorial identity in Sussex providing a greater incentive for landowners to advertise their ownership in this way. The occasional parish survey also occurs and these, as for those of the larger estates, used a format similar to that adopted by the tithe surveyors: separate plans showing what was on the ground and schedules in book form showing ownership, occupation and the area of the holdings in acres, roods and perches – sometimes with the state of cultivation. The format for smaller estates and individual farms was similar, involving a drawn plan with a terrier or key to the land holding – typically, naming the owner and tenants

with the sizes of fields recorded and occasionally the state of cultivation as well; for individual farms and small estates this information was usually conveyed on one sheet.

Other forms of evidence contemporaneous with the pre-tithe survey material exists in the form of title deeds, farm leases, wills and inventories, manorial records (for Sussex in particular) and Land Tax assessments - it would be extremely convenient to be able to cross reference all of this material, but this is often difficult. For example, title deeds are plentiful for the estates of the gentry, and a few also relate to the holdings of lesser landowners, however, it is frequently hard to identify particular parcels of land with any certainty. Wills and inventories¹ are another good source of information; the former are of more direct use in terms of landownership than inventories because of their references to real estate (particularly in Kent), although the information in inventories can be useful in estimations of wealth and, sometimes, broad indications of acreage. Both classes of document are only really plentiful from the late sixteenth century to the early eighteenth century. There is a continuous series of land tax assessments² for the period of the study from 1780, which potentially provides information on ownership and occupation. Ginter has pointed out the difficulties of interpreting these documents, and the pitfalls in attempting to work out acreages based on the values that they record (Ginter 1992, 13-51). However, they help to establish broadly the number of landlords and occupiers as a comparison with the material found in the

¹ ACC Index of Wills 1449-1712, vol. I (Benenden) & vol. III (Rolvenden). For index of inventories CKS PRC/11/49-87. ESRO...

² CKS Q/CT1 and ESRO...

various parish surveys. A direct comparison between owners and occupiers in the land tax assessments and those in the parish surveys is often difficult. This is so in Kent, especially, where the land tax uses the Hundred as the basis of its assessments (rather than the parish, as in Sussex), where hundred boundaries cannot be accurately established on the ground. The Sussex manorial records, particularly from the sixteenth century, have been critically examined for the major manors, such as Etchingham and Salehurst, Robertsbridge and Bodiam (Sussex Record Society vols. 47; 53; 65), and it has been possible to tie these in successfully with contemporary survey material. However, it is the ease of intelligibility of the plan-based materials that offers the best comparisons with the nineteenth century evidence. The approach adopted here for the analysis of the post-medieval settlement pattern is to interrogate the tithe survey material in order to establish a baseline, and then relate it to earlier evidence.

APPENDIX E:

OVERVIEW OF THE EARLY SETTLEMENT HISTORY OF THE EASTERN HIGH WEALD

The geographical area of the Weald is divided into a number of distinct and ancient administrative entities that are now established as the modern counties of Surrey, Kent and East and West Sussex. The eastern High Weald (the focus of this study) falls into the counties of Kent and East Sussex and it is the early settlement history of these two counties that will be the subject of this overview. What is clear is that until very recently research has concentrated on each of these counties separately and it has only been with the advent of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that there has been a research focus on the High Weald as a whole. The challenge now is to re-assess the findings of previous (county based) research to produce a unified understanding of early settlement. An earlier attempt to do this was produced by the High Weald AONB Unit in its publication *The Making of the High Weald* (Harris 2003). Harris effectively summarised the outcome of previous and more recent work without necessarily evolving a unified strategy for understanding this early stage in the areas settlement history.

There is a long tradition of the study of Kentish settlement in modern times pioneered by Edward Hasted in the latter years of the eighteenth century, at a time when the role of the old Lathe and Hundred administrative units were still (just) more than a memory (Hasted 1798). Furley's history of the Weald of Kent (Furley 1871) was very much in this tradition, but with more conventional scholarship and his work was

arguably the first modern attempt to systematically understand the origins of Wealden settlement in particular. Perhaps the most influential work in the post war period has been Witney's *The Jutish Forest: a study of the Weald of Kent from 450 to 1380 A.D.* (Witney 1976) and Everitt's *Continuity and Colonization: the evolution of Kentish settlement*, a detailed and coherent interpretation of the evidence for early settlement (Everitt 1986), based on his earlier work on the agrarian landscape of Kent (Everitt 1976). Witney's research was, by his own admission, strongly influenced by Jolliffe's *Pre-Feudal England: the Jutes* (Jolliffe 1933) and Du Boulay's *The Lordship of Canterbury* (Du Boulay 1966). He relied upon a wide range of evidence, including place name evidence such as that supplied by Wallenburgh in *The Place Names of Kent* (Wallenburg 1934), the large number of early Saxon charters, Domesday Book, as well as later historical sources including manorial records. Witney's great contribution to our knowledge of Wealden settlement was his detailed analysis of the drove ways leading primarily from the northern manors into the Weald, his brilliant exposition of the history and formation of the Kentish Lathes with their associated commons, as well as the development of the Wealden dens and their relationship to the northern manors. Witney's work was followed ten years later by Everitt's, using similar sources but with more recent archaeological evidence, which argued for continuity of the Saxon northern estates with earlier Roman ones. The message from both these authors was that whilst there was a degree of continuity between Roman and Saxon settlement in the north of the county there was no continuity in the Weald, which they claimed was an area of Saxon colonisation by piecemeal advance. This colonisation was driven by a process of resource exploitation by the northern estates and manors seeking pannage for their swineherds

and timber, which in the years following the Saxon settlement of the coastal fringes led them further and deeper into the uninhabited Weald. Within this process Wealden settlement was typified by impermanent, seasonal settlement in the Early Saxon period, followed by the gradual establishment of permanent settlement into the Late Saxon period; but which was still incomplete in some areas of the High Weald at the time of Domesday. This emphasis on a lack of continuity with pre-Saxon settlement and the seasonality in settlement patterns, together with the dominance of transhumance in terms of economic and social activity, became the commonly accepted interpretation of the development of settlement morphology of the High Weald until very recent times (Brandon 2003, 50). These ideas, originally researched and promulgated from Kentish sources, were mirrored in the contemporary research of the Sussex Weald by Peter Brandon who also favoured a later period for Wealden settlement (Brandon 1974; 1978), although in his more recent writings has accepted a somewhat broader interpretation of the sources concerning the advent of permanent settlement (Brandon, 2003, 50-51).

Recent research has re-evaluated much of the evidence as well as seeking a wider range of sources. For example, Gardiner has argued that in the eastern Sussex Weald (the area containing the parishes of Bodiam, Etchingham and Salehurst) permanent settlement was more widely established than had previously been considered the case and that most of the High Weald had permanent settlement by 1086, “even in the most distant areas of the Weald” (Gardiner 1995, 68). Harris in his overview of the most up to date Kent and Sussex Weald research generally supported the idea that permanent settlement occurred earlier rather than later and that there was most probably some level of continuity with Romano-British

settlement patterns, particularly in relation to an earlier (possibly Iron Age) practice of transhumance (Harris 2003, 25). Thomas in a paper given to the South East Research Framework challenges assumptions, based on earlier research, that the Weald was colonised piecemeal from the edges inwards, but instead suggests rather that colonisation was an expansion of settlement from within – that is the Weald was fully explored and known early on (possible through transhumance) and more permanent settlement produced on the back of this (Thomas 2007). The development of improved techniques and understanding of the strength and weaknesses of different evidential resources has led to a re-evaluation of the evidence itself during the last fifteen to twenty years. This, more than the turning up of completely new sources of evidence has led to a shift in how early settlement patterns are understood.

The issues that need to be better understood in terms of the Weald are those concerned with continuity of settlement patterns from Roman Britain into the English Settlement and with transhumance, a key process in early Wealden settlement morphology. In reality these two broad areas of concern are frequently closely linked in terms of their sources of evidence. However, underlying the whole issue of early permanent settlement in the Weald (and the High Weald in particular) is the lack of clear archaeological evidence for such settlement, either before or immediately after the Saxon colonisation of the Southeast of England. Earlier writers like Witney, Everitt and (to some extent) Brandon have chosen to read this lack of evidence as proof that no early permanent settlement existed (and in the context of this study this is principally referenced to the eastern High Weald). Later writers like Gardiner, Harris and Thomas are more cautious in their estimation of this point. Typically they point out that the lack of evidence is not evidence

for a lack of early settlement as there are good reasons why the evidence may be hard to find (Gardiner 1990, 33-35). For example, there has been comparatively little archaeological excavation in this area of the High Weald and in any case evidence for early Saxon habitation is notoriously difficult to find and easily missed. Field walking, which has been very productive in other parts of the country, is difficult in an area of mainly pastoral farming (as the High Weald has reverted to in recent years – although there are still significant areas of mixed farming which could be exploited). Metal detecting is hampered for similar reasons as field walking, and the Portable Antiquities Scheme has not yet produced much in terms of Saxon finds, although it is still early days as this initiative is still relatively new¹. As elsewhere in the country, there is potential for earlier settlement evidence to be hidden or destroyed by later development. Certain types of occupational evidence for the Iron Age and Roman periods is better, particularly that relating to the iron industry and related agricultural settlement (Gardiner 1990, 43-47; Harris 2003, 24-25 & 38). Much of the investigative effort has been concentrated in recent years on Roman ways in the Weald (Margary 1946, 1948, 1955) and on the Roman iron industry (Cleere 1975; Cleere & Crossley 1995), resulting in some seminal work. However, archaeological evidence for Saxon settlement in the Weald has been less forthcoming (Gardiner 1990, 47), the search less systematic with fewer resources applied than elsewhere. Unless or until more archaeological evidence is forthcoming the question of settlement continuity will always be a contentious and

¹ Information obtained from the Portable Antiquities Scheme show relatively few finds within this part of the High Weald, and Saxon finds represent a small percentage of the assemblage, which is of uncertain provenance.

difficulty issue, which will make a final resolution of the debate over early settlement dates unlikely.

Transhumance has been central to the argument of how settlement developed in the Weald generally, and the High Weald in particular. Indeed the use of the term 'transhumance' is itself of considerable interest. It was originally a term used almost exclusively by human geographers and anthropologists to mean the seasonal movement of animals and people as part of a major process of resource exploitation or conservation (Salzman 1996, 553; Forde 1934). Key to the original concept of transhumance is that it is primarily connected to a major season – summer or winter – and that it either enables the exploitation of resources in areas that are climatically unsuitable for year round habitation (for example, the Swiss Alps), or is a mechanism for removing people from an area that is not capable of supporting the total population throughout the whole year: for example, in south-western Asia and North Africa (Stewart *et al* 1976, 377/8). An essential element to the concept is that peoples practicing *transhumance* should have permanent settlements and practice arable agriculture – otherwise the practice is *nomadism* (Johnson 1969, 18-19).

Transhumance as a term has been widely adopted by landscape historians and others, who use it in a wide range of geographical contexts and for the seasonal movements of a number of different types of animals. Many of these uses clearly correspond to the original definition of the concept, but in other cases the term is now applied to circumstances where the 'season' has been reduced to a few weeks (for example, in all occurrences of pannage), and frequently where there is no climatic reason why permanent settlement should not be established throughout the year (as, for example, in the Weald itself). This is not just a pedantic point, as it has

important implications about the efficient use of resources and, therefore, the likelihood of transhumance being adopted by early societies as a successful strategy. This is particularly so where instances of transhumance in relation to pannage are claimed because of the sub-seasonal nature of the practice. The issues that need to be addressed concern, for example, the energy equations around the short pannage season and the distance of travel (that is, at what distance is the net gain in energy negated by the gross expenditure of energy by man and beast to exploit the pannage?). These questions need to be born in mind when considering the arguments about Wealden transhumance as set out below.

As has been postulated, earlier writers like Witney and Everitt believed that transhumance was an Anglo-Saxon phenomenon, which explained how the Weald was colonised. More recently others have suggested the possibility for an earlier pre-Roman origin for the practice and, thereby, raising the prospect of a degree of continuity between pre and post Roman settlement patterns (Harris 2003, 24-26). Partly the argument for continuity is based on a reading of how the High Weald was administered during the Roman period and how agriculture and the iron industry developed before and during the Roman occupation. Cleere has pointed out that the Weald was an Imperial Estate under the control of the *Classis Britannica*, which he believed would have excluded civilian activity in the area during the Roman period (Cleere 1975, 171-199). However, more recently it has been argued that the evidence of continued civilian iron workings and the possibility of the continued use of pre-historic drove roads for transhumance pastoralism suggest that the area controlled by the military was less exclusive than Cleere thought (Rudling 1999, 24-25). Linked to this argument is the debate over the exact relationship between the network of Roman roads and the

skein of drove roads and ridgeway trackways that cross the High Weald. For those scholars who believe that transhumance came with the Saxons, the Roman roads represent a separate phenomenon largely associated with the iron industry and had consequently lost their purpose by the end of the Roman occupation (Rudling 1999, 24). The implication is, therefore, that the drove ways leading into and out of the Weald were of a later date and unconnected with the Roman network of roads (although some of them seem to have utilised stretches of the Roman ways in places). Others believe that these drove ways are potentially quite ancient and may represent local pastoral activity that continued during the Roman occupation and, therefore, may have been just one more aspect of the local resources taken over by the Saxons with the coastal estates (see Harris 2003, 22-25 for an overview of the evidence). Continued use of droveways connected with existing Roman estate practices is supported by the historic county boundaries of both Kent and Sussex in this part of the High Weald, as they broadly accord with the tribal territories of the *Cantiaci* (Kent) and the *Regni* (Sussex).

Transhumance in the Wealden context has been associated almost exclusively with the movement of swine, an emphasis drawn from the early charter evidence (Hooke 1989, 113). The case has been built upon an interpretation of the rationale for the network of drove roads, connecting the coastal estates in both Kent and Sussex, to Wealden commons (initially) and to the later dens (Everitt 1986, 35-39). The land tenure connection between the Weald and the coastal estates (and later on the manors of north Kent and coastal Sussex) is well established (Witney 1976, 211-217). There can be little doubt that the High Wealden commons of the fifth and sixth centuries and an early network of wood pastures (dens) translated into a

growing number of manorial dens from about the eighth century, and that they had eventually developed, by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, into independent manors and farms. What, perhaps, needs re-examination is whether the farming of swine (as stated by the charters and later manorial documents) necessitates a transhumance economy as postulated, and specifically one focussed solely on the pig.

The straightforward interpretation of early sources, such as Saxon charters, in relation to the mention of swine and swine pasture certainly suggest the central role that this animal played in pasture economy generally, and the Weald in particular. However, to what extent this indicated that actual activity on the ground was exclusively swine-centred², rather than being primarily an assessment of value or area of the holding (a mechanism that simply was not designed to show up the full range of agricultural activities) is uncertain. The use of swine numbers and pannage in Domesday to indicate the extent, measure or value of woodland must give pause for thought. The documentary evidence so often appears ambiguous even with the rather fuller corpus of written evidence from about the twelfth century. Later medieval charters and manorial records quoted in Furley and Witney records the break down of manorial control in the Weald and the breaking away of the permanent settlements of the Weald from their parent manors, but some of the practices recorded there can hardly be novel (Witney 1976, 154-186). For example, the payment of fines for exemption from forest law designed to protect the pannage

² Place name evidence does not directly support the charter material. Places associated with specific animals are comparatively rare (there are, however, two Cowdens, one in Sussex and another in Kent as well as a small number of other animal prefixes). Most typical Wealden names, such as 'den' and 'hurst', contain either personal names, or are associated with trees or other natural features (Dodgson 1978, 54-88; Brandon 1978, 145-146).

(principally the prohibition on Autumn ploughing) appears to be on the increase at this time (Du Boulay 1961, 85-86), suggesting that as permanent settlement increased swine transhumance was in decline, which from other evidence we know it was. However, this certainly also records a practice of exemption that is probable as ancient as permanent settlement itself - since Autumn ploughing in the weald is essential because of the high water retention of the clayey soils.

The idea that the main economic purpose of the Weald for the Early Saxons was, in early times, to provide a venue for a swine based economy has led to some interesting results. Not least is the recent re-interpretation of the Saxon word from which the modern English word *den* is derived. In Old English the word *denn* means generically a wood pasture, or clearing in a wood for pasturing animals, whilst the exact term for a swine pasture is *denn-baere*, a term often referred to in early charters (Sweet 1896, 41) – however, because of the historic context *den* is frequently translated as swine-pasture regardless of circumstance, which use has tended in recent times to have distorted the evidence (for example, Brandon 2003, 45). A question that may be worth considering is whether the regular reference to swine in the documentary evidence and the actual existence of trackways connecting parent estates to distant wood pasture necessarily add up to transhumance along the lines traditionally hypothesized – could there be a case for the existence of a number of agricultural and pastoral activities and arrangements of which transhumance is one element?

What seems to be lacking at present is a coherent analysis of how transhumance in the Wealden context worked, and what practical considerations, opportunities and constraints transhumance actually imposed on such a society. This is an inquiry for another time, but at least

recognition of some of the issues may be worth recording here. Seasonal transhumance on the scale proposed would have been a colossal undertaking - possibly involving more than 75,000 animals in Kent alone; based on Witney's estimate of an annual swine rent from the Weald for Kentish manors of around 7,500 animals (Witney 1990, 23). Pigs are notoriously difficult to herd and this must have taken men away from the parent estate around the time when they would be needed at the busiest period of the agricultural calendar. Journey times must have been slow, particularly to the more distant pastures and in order to maintain the animals' condition adequate quantities of feed must have been needed³. If there were no permanent agricultural settlements in the Weald in the early days, all food for the men for the whole period of the pannage season that could not be collected from the wild must have been transported. The maintenance of the dens in preparation for the herds must also have been a considerable draw on resources for the comparatively short season of the pannage; this is not just for the men's own shelters but also hedging or fencing to control the animals and prevent them from wandering off into the forest away from the dens⁴. Furthermore, the value of pannage itself as a basis for animal husbandry has been called into question, not least because of its unpredictability (Rackham 1986, 122).

³ Everitt has estimated that the majority of dens were 10 to 25 miles from their parent manor, but some were considerably further such as Tenterden (the den of the men of Thanet), which was more than forty miles distant (Everitt 1986, 123).

⁴ In the *English Forest and Forest Trees* (published by Ingram, Cooke, and Co., 1853 – author unknown), describing pannage in the New Forest in the late eighteenth century, tells how the swine were trained to answer to the horn (Ingram, Cooke, and Co. 1853, 168). However, in this instance the pannage was local and therefore the way the swine were driven into the forest is not recorded.

For the more distant dens it now seems unlikely that the parent manor sought to pannage swine directly upon them (Witney 1990, 24), and this may be so for any but the closest to the parent settlement. For one thing, the maintenance of soil fertility must have been as much a priority then as it was to later farmers, and therefore the removal of animals for a considerable period of time from the arable areas of the estate or manorial holdings must have been seen as a wasteful process. If the Saxons did initiate swine transhumance as a way of tapping into an otherwise unused territorial resource, one simply wonders how long it must have been before leaving permanent, food producing settlement in the Weald – maybe along with the majority of the herds (perhaps only driving back to the parent estates the animals needed for the Winter kill) – must have seems a very attractive option (Wooldridge & Goldring 1966, 208).

APPENDIX F

KENT AND SUSSEX TITHE SURVEYS

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Chart 1.1 Landowners and their Acreage – BENENDEN

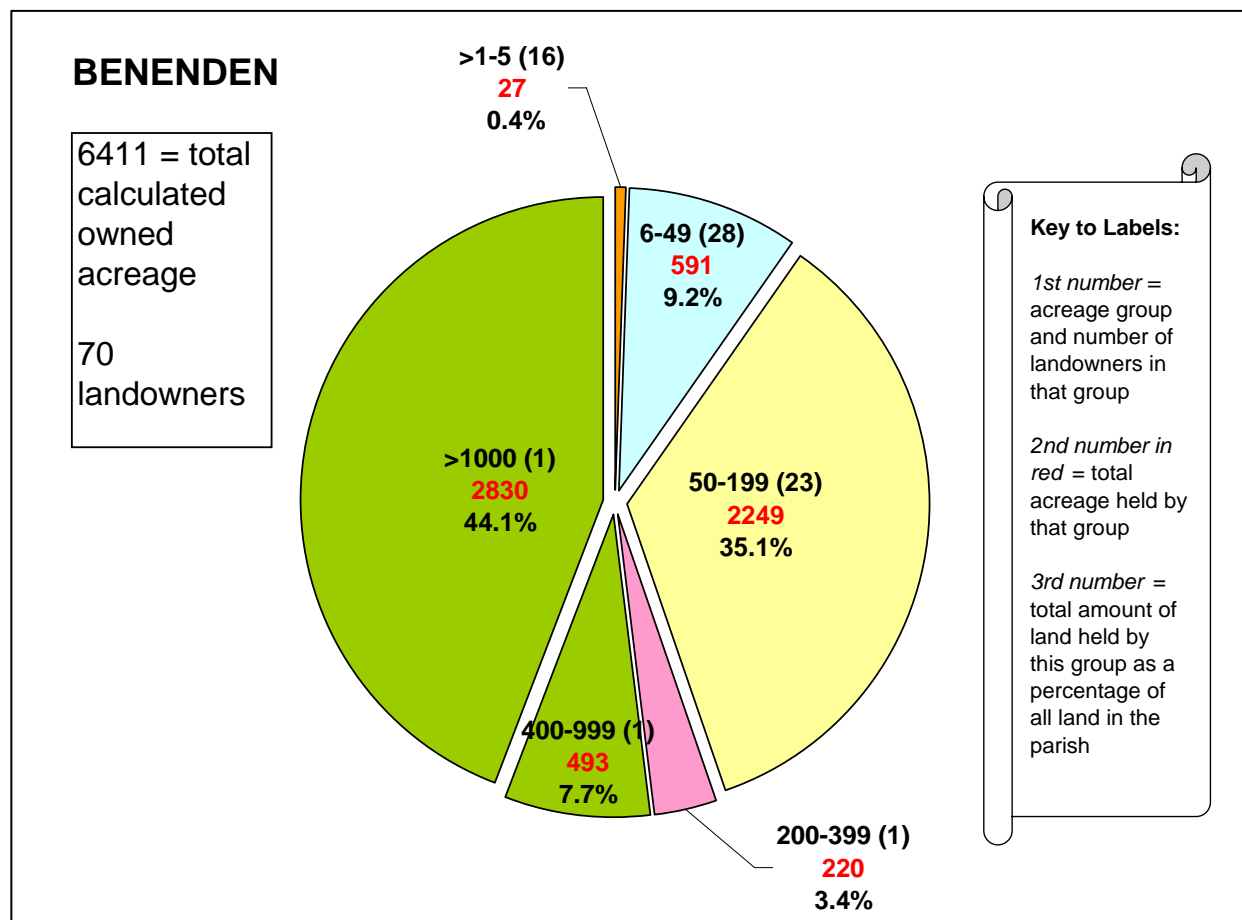


Chart 1.2 Landowners and their Acreage – BODIAM

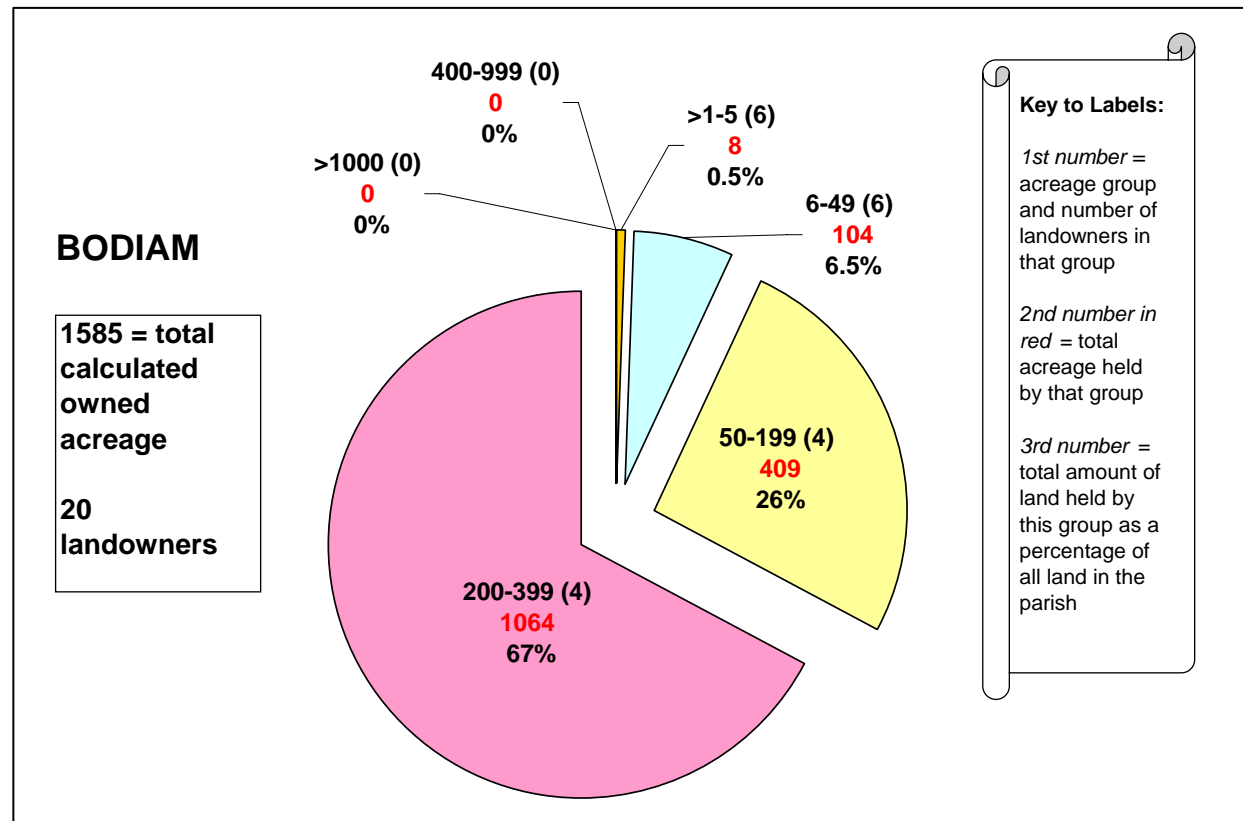


Chart 1.3 Landowners and their Acreage – ETCHINGHAM

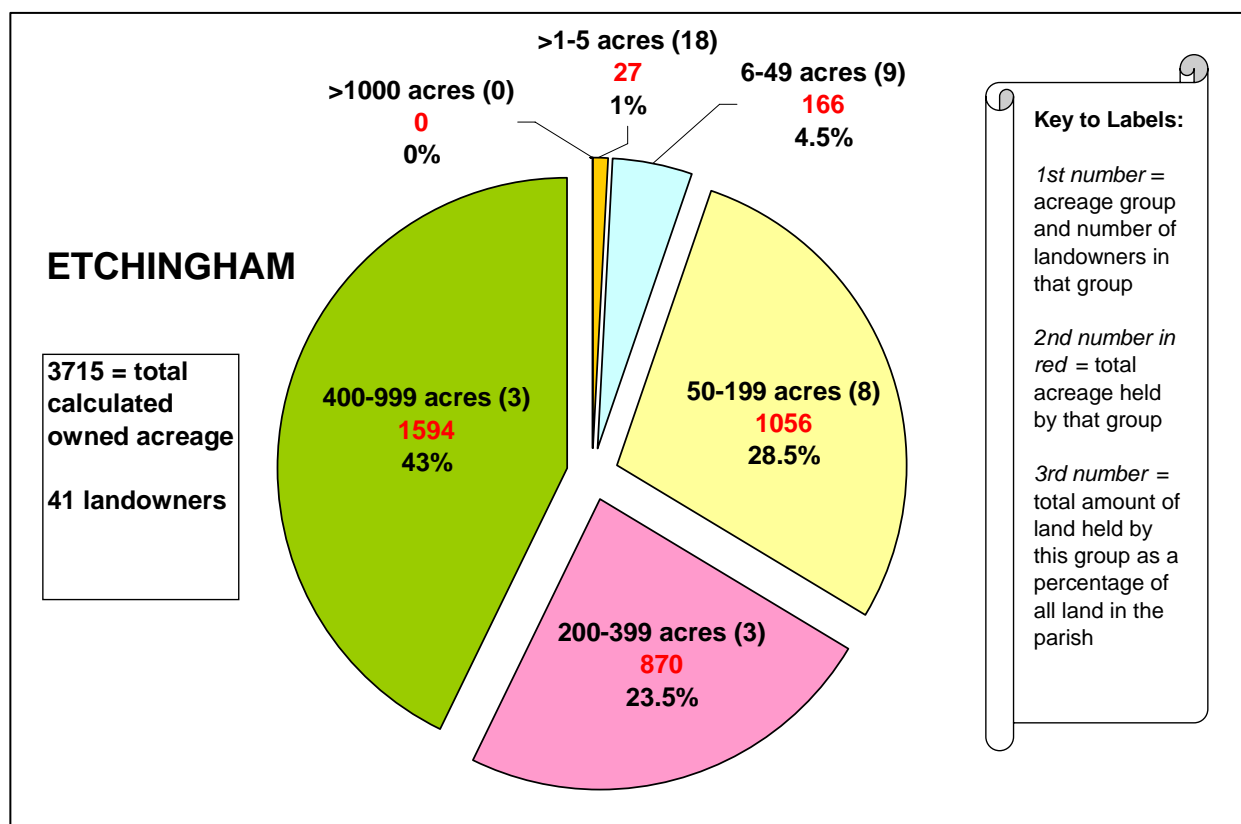


Chart 1.4 Landowners and their Acreage – NEWENDEN

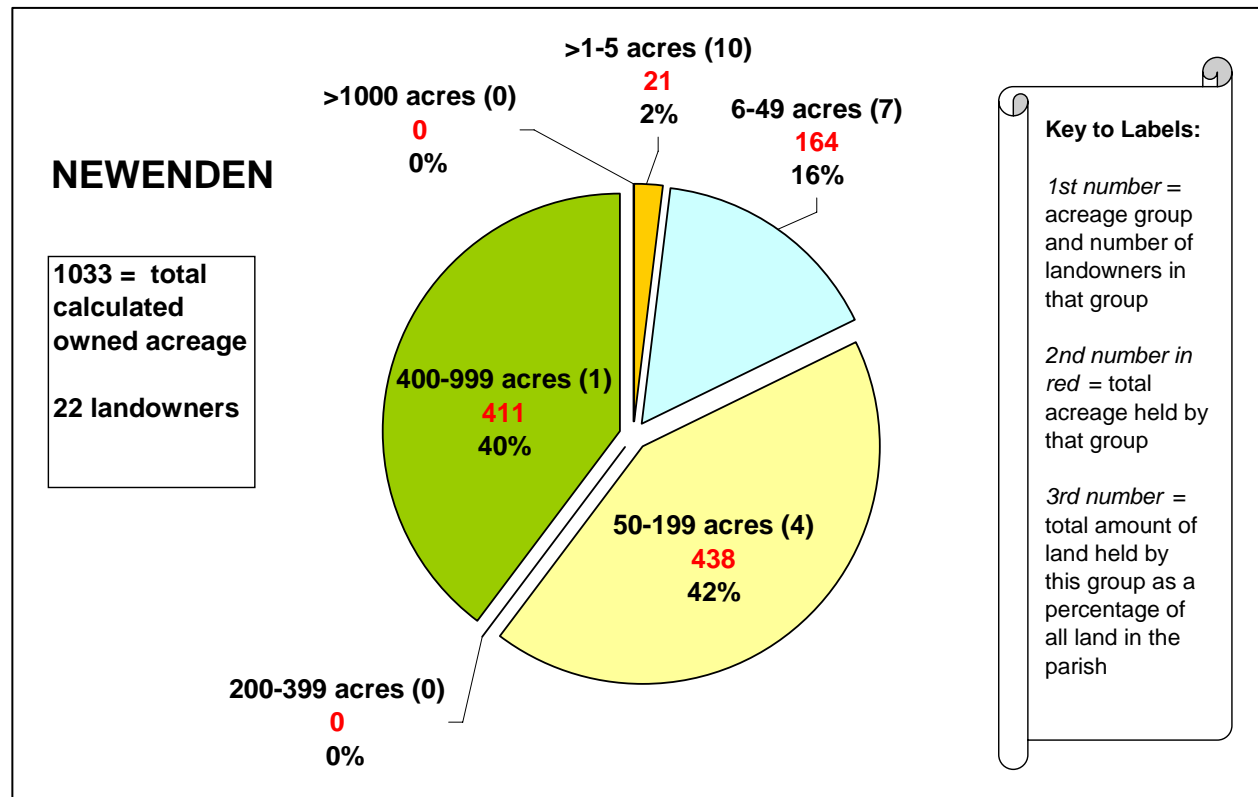


Chart 1.5 Landowners and their Acreage – ROLVENDEN

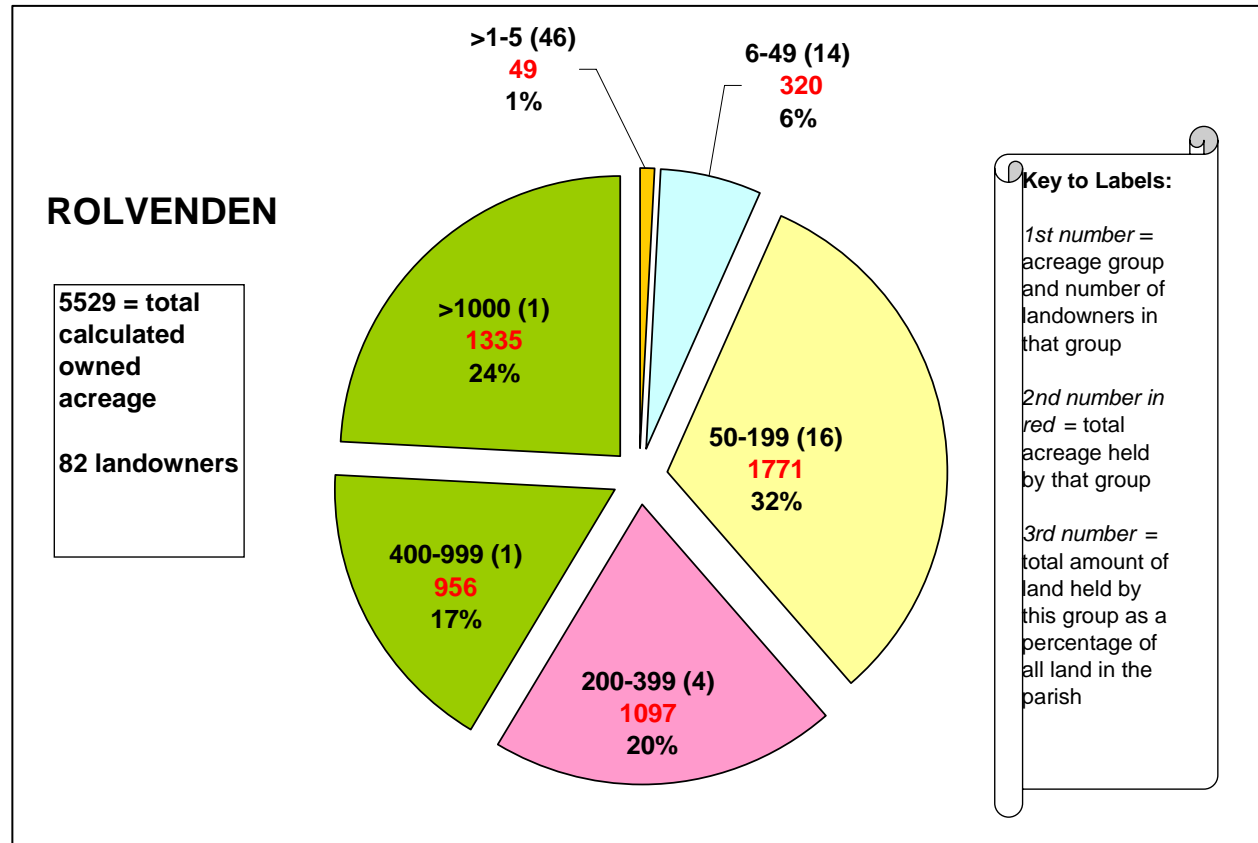


Chart 1.6 Landowners and their Acreage – SALEHURST

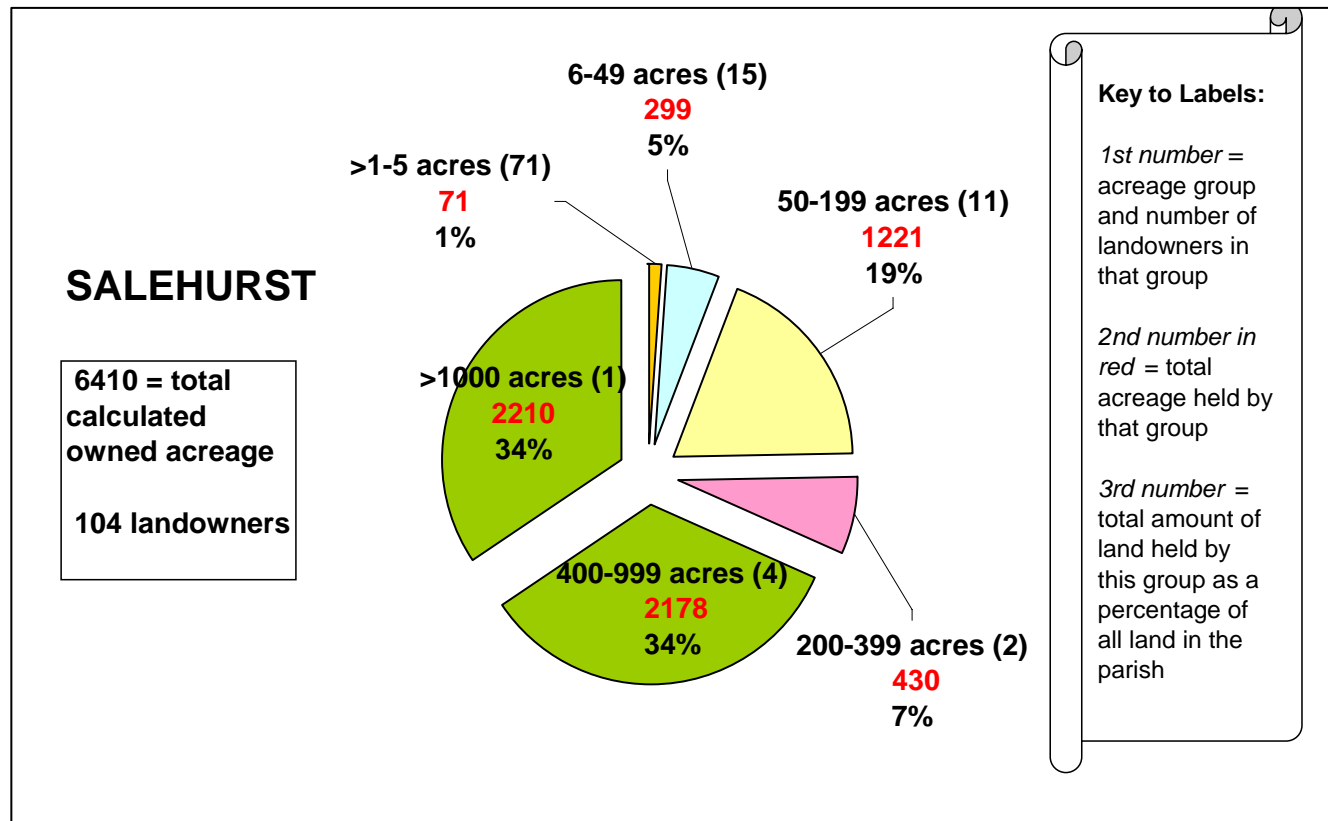


Chart 2.1 Occupied Holdings: BENENDEN

(1) as a proportion of all Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage; (2) compared to Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage as a proportion of Total Parish Acreage.

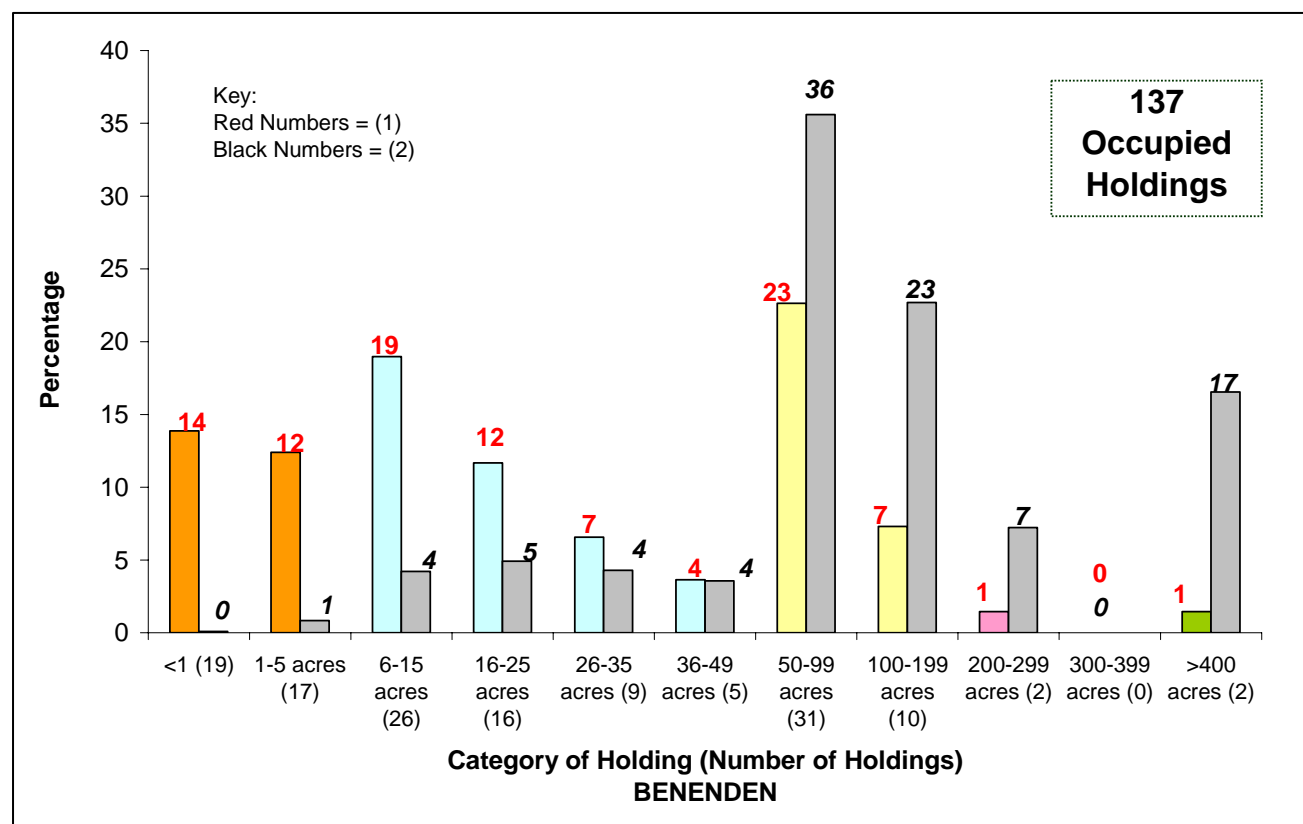


Chart 2.2 Occupied Holdings: BODIAM

(1) as a proportion of all Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage; (2) compared to Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage as a proportion of Total Parish Acreage.

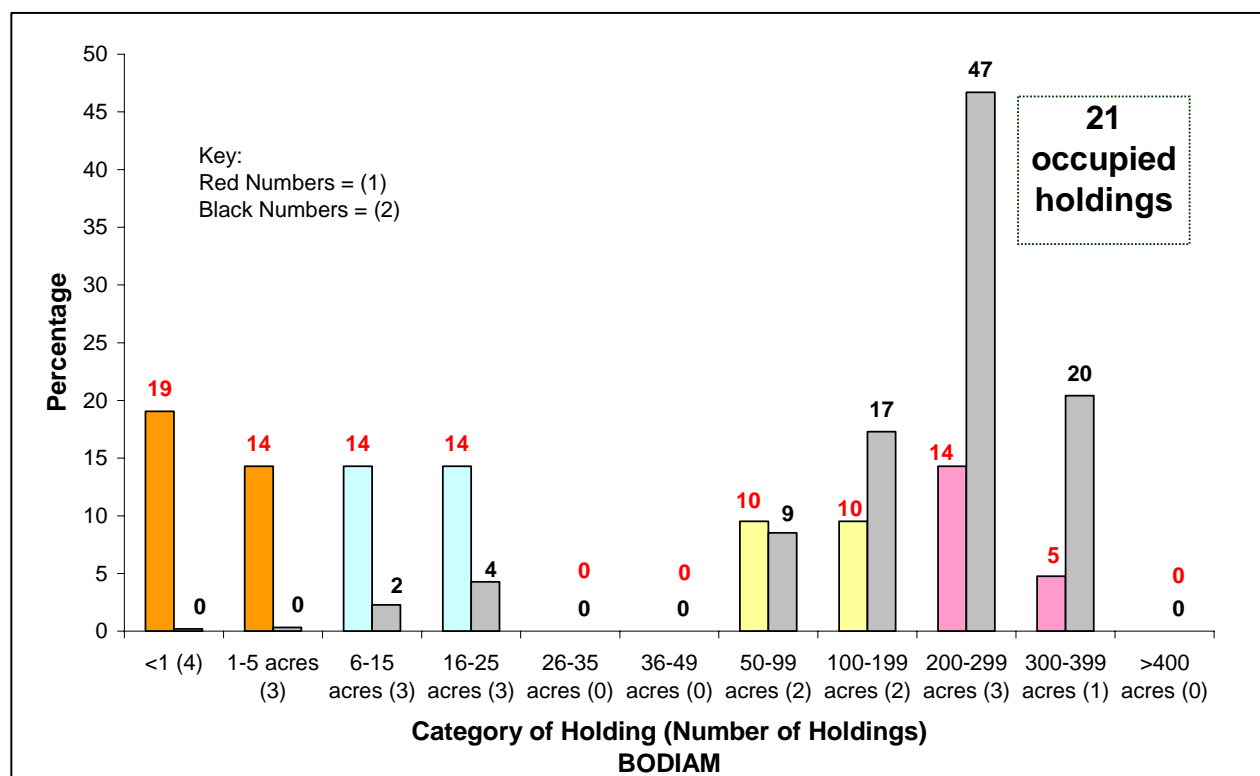


Chart 2.3 Occupied Holdings: ETCHINGHAM

(1) as a proportion of all Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage; (2) compared to Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage as a proportion of Total Parish Acreage.

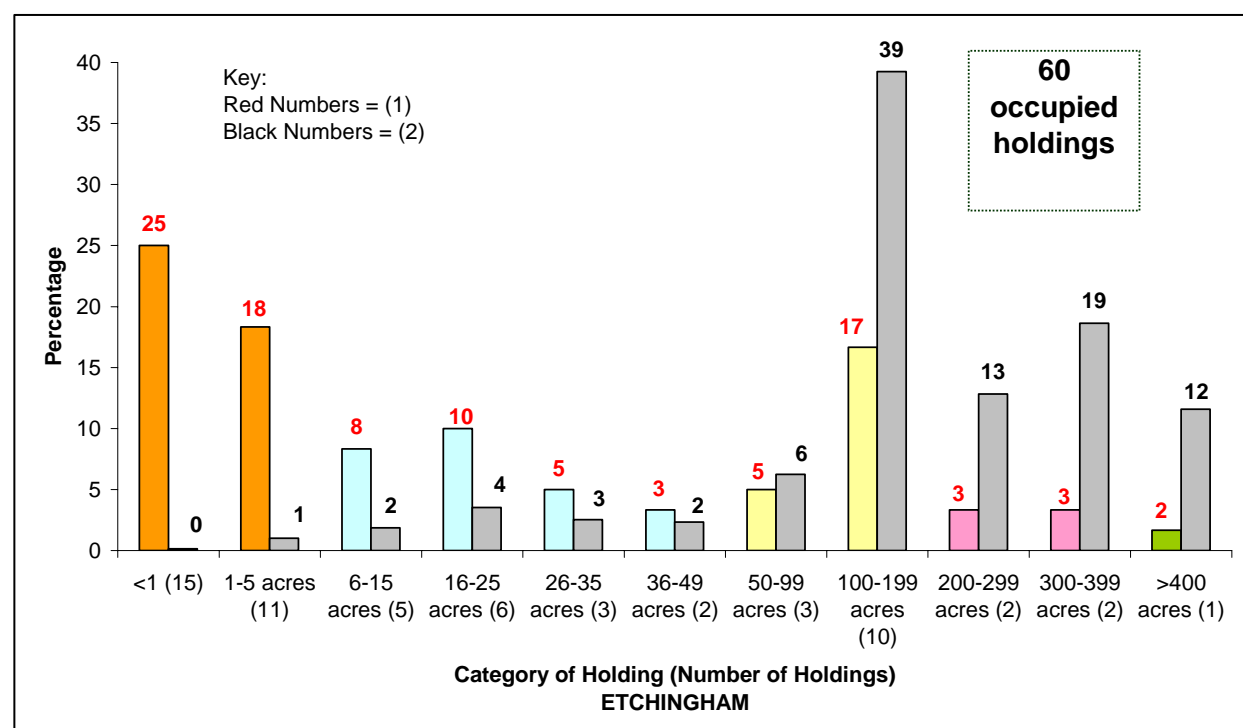


Chart 2.4 Occupied Holdings: NEWENDEN

(1) as a proportion of all Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage; (2) compared to Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage as a proportion of Total Parish Acreage.

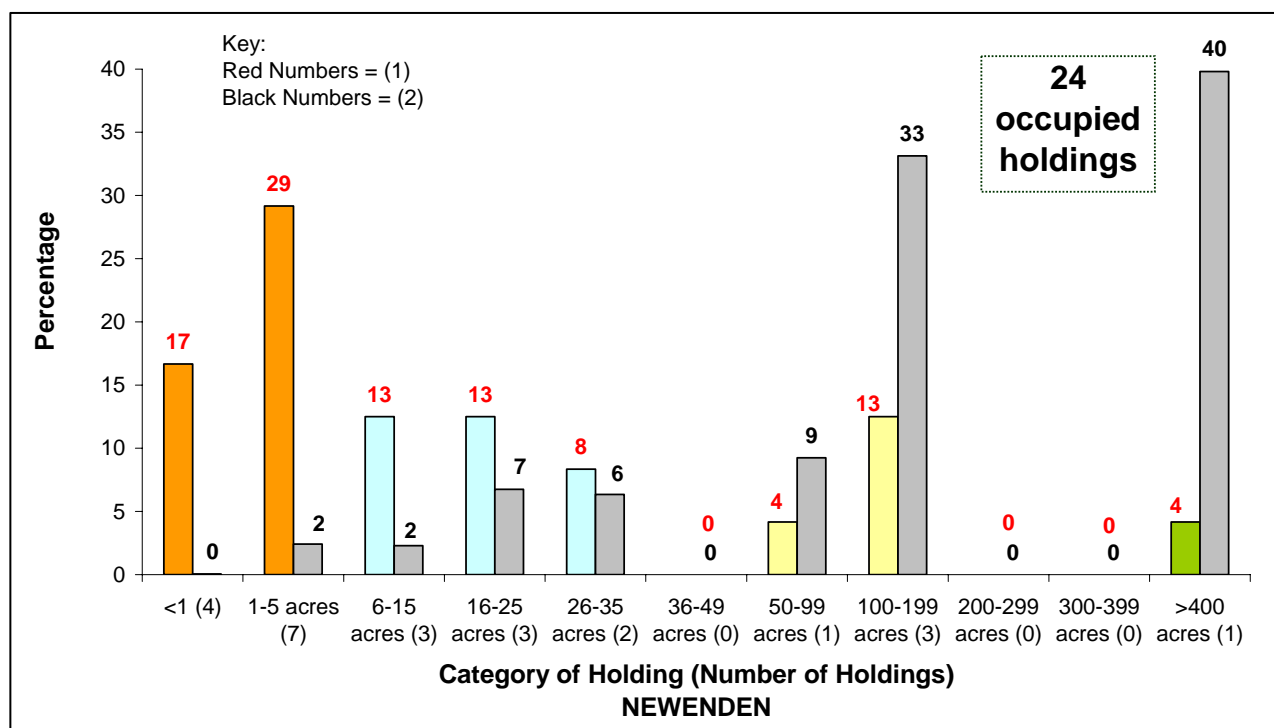


Chart 2.5 Occupied Holdings: ROLVENDEN

(1) as a proportion of all Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage; (2) compared to Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage as a proportion of Total Parish Acreage.

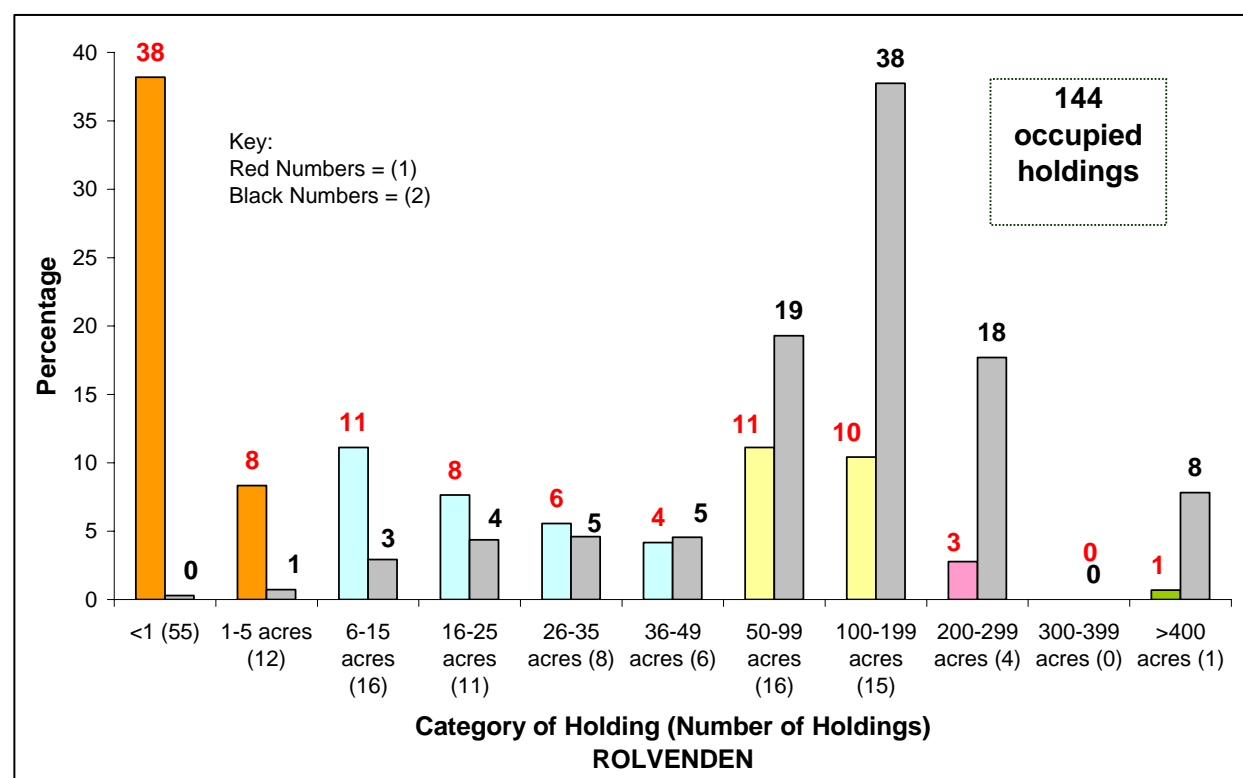


Chart 2.6 Occupied Holdings: SALEHURST

(1) as a proportion of all Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage; (2) compared to Occupier Holdings by Category of Acreage as a proportion of Total Parish Acreage.

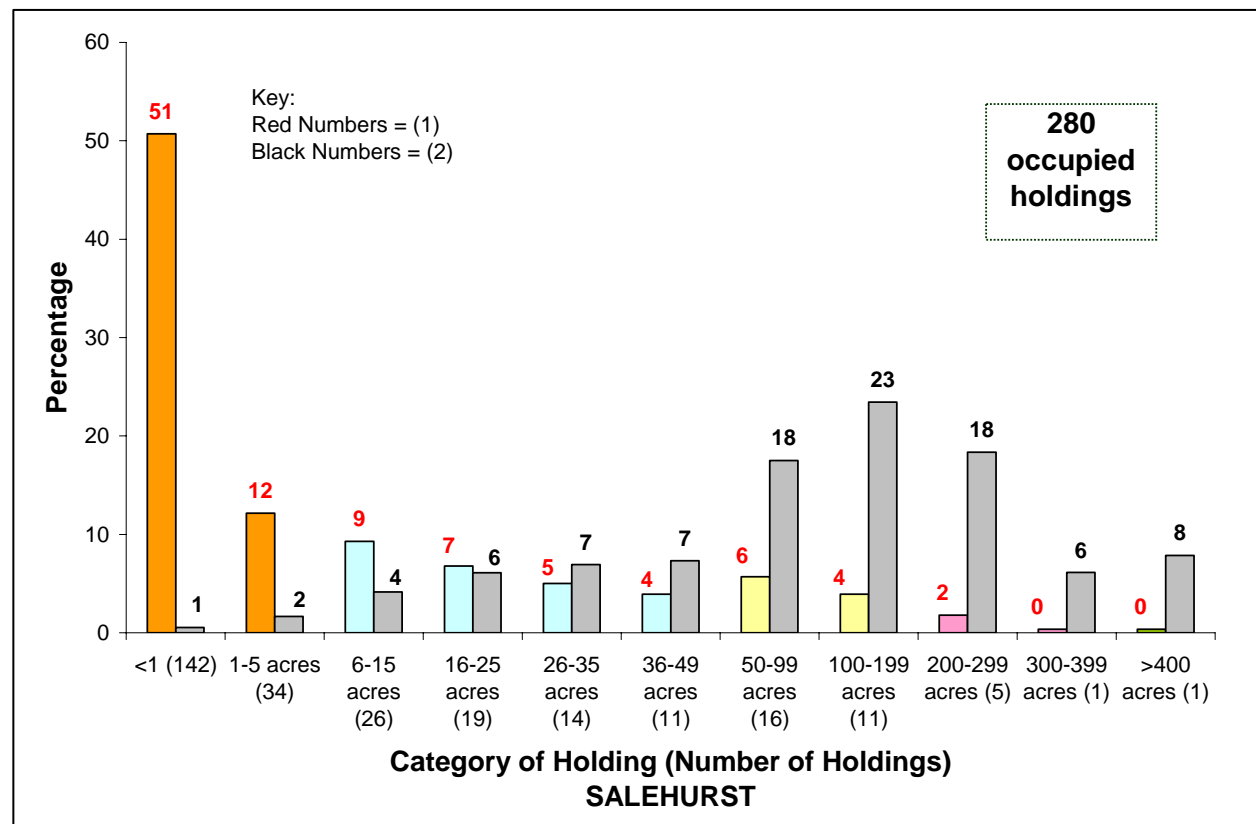


Chart 3.1 Farm Units of >= 6 acres: BENENDEN

(1) Number of farm units as a percentage of all farm units in the parish; (2) compared to Farm Units by Category of Acreage >=6 acres as a percentage of Parish Acreage

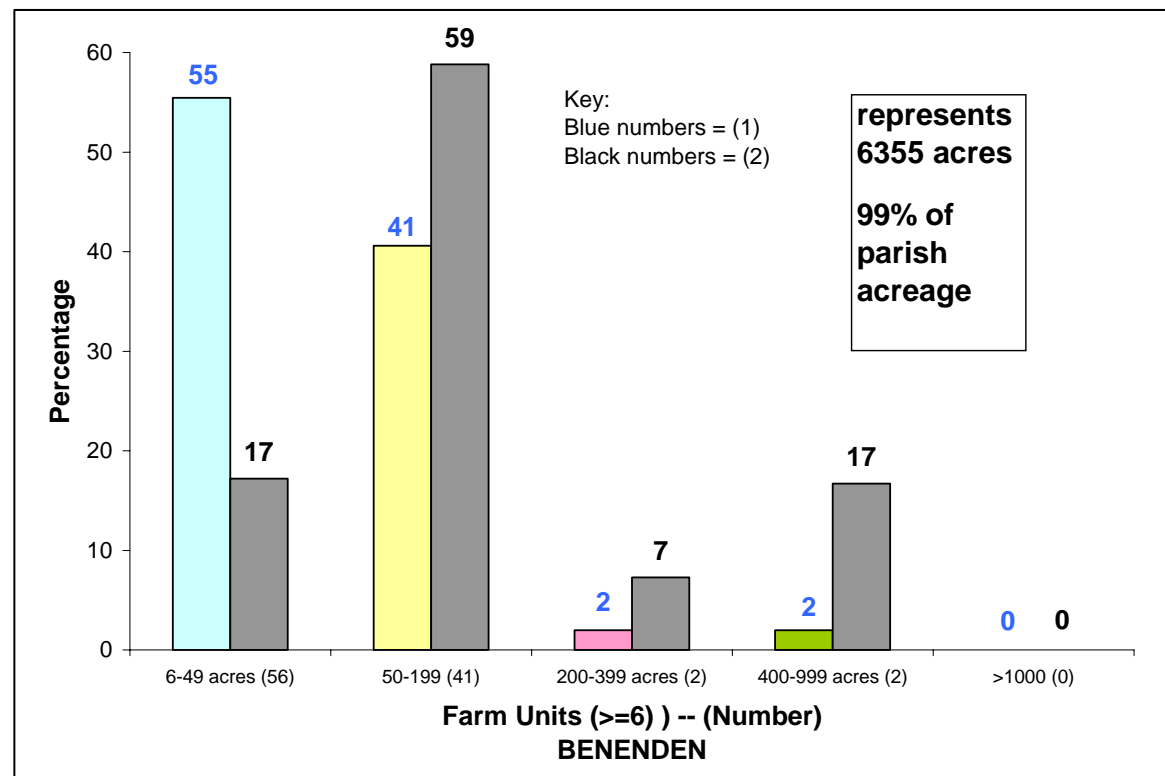


Chart 3.2 Farm Units of >= 6 acres: BODIAM

(1) Number of farm units as a percentage of all farm units in the parish; (2) compared to Farm Units by Category of Acreage >=6 acres as a percentage of Parish Acreage

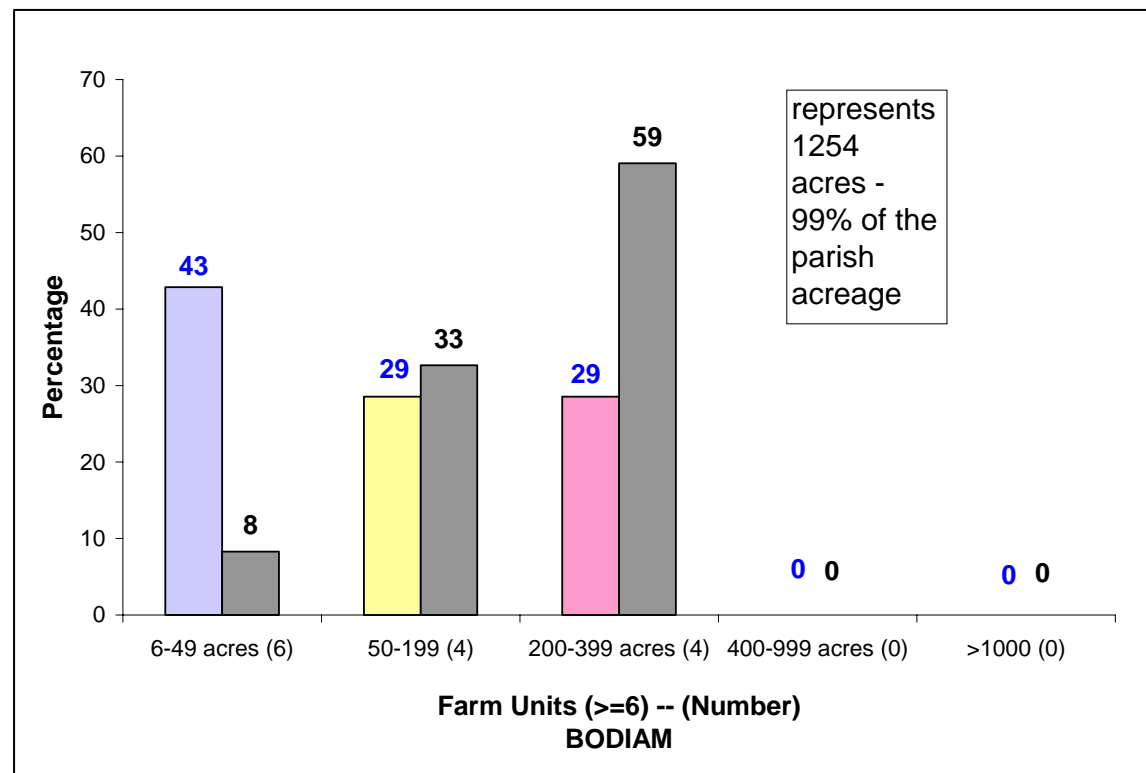


Chart 3.3 Farm Units of >= 6 acres: ETCHINGHAM

(1) Number of farm units as a percentage of all farm units in the parish; (2) compared to Farm Units by Category of Acreage >=6 acres as a percentage of Parish Acreage

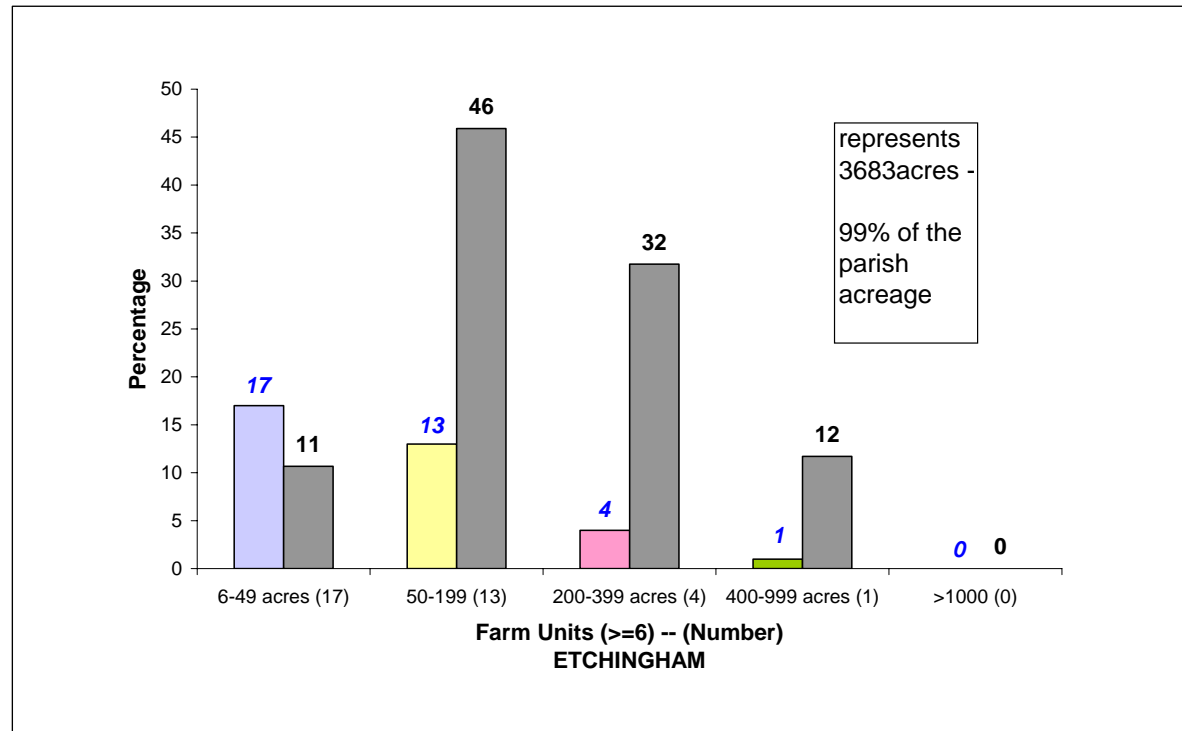


Chart 3.4 Farm Units of >= 6 acres: NEWENDEN

(1) Number of farm units as a percentage of all farm units in the parish; (2) compared to Farm Units by Category of Acreage >=6 acres as a percentage of Parish Acreage

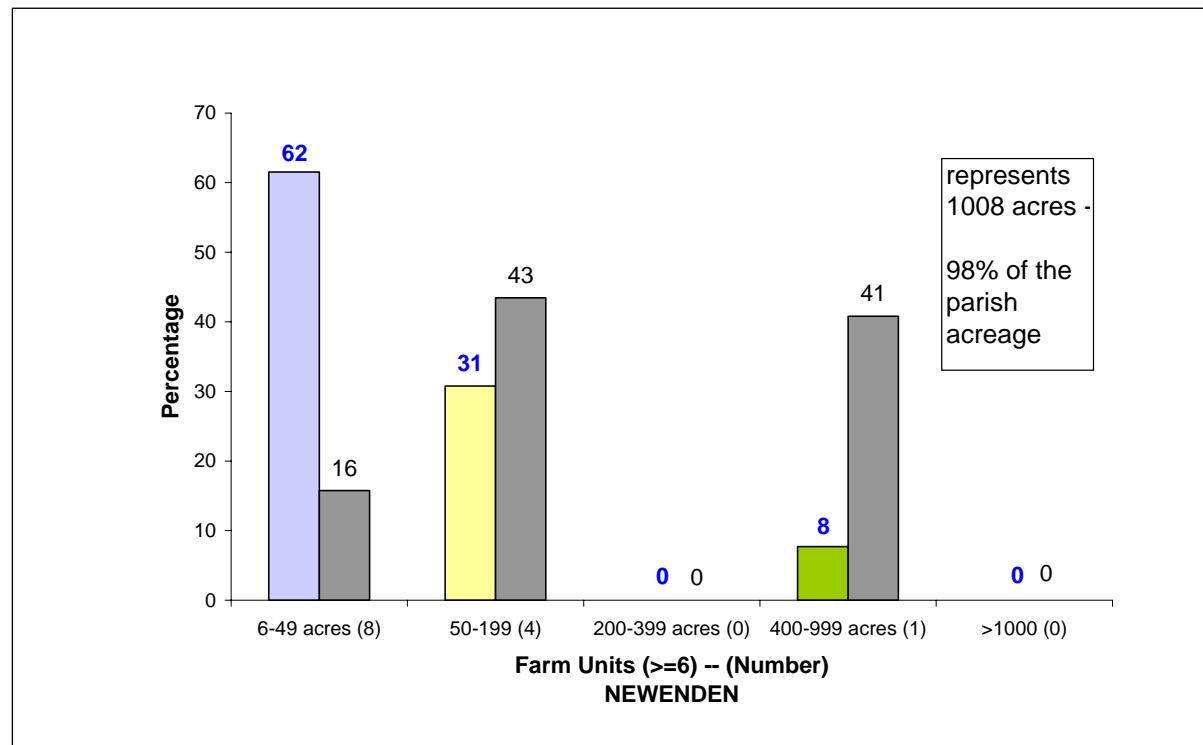


Chart 3.5 Farm Units of >= 6 acres: ROLVENDEN

(1) Number of farm units as a percentage of all farm units in the parish; (2) compared to Farm Units by Category of Acreage >=6 acres as a percentage of Parish Acreage

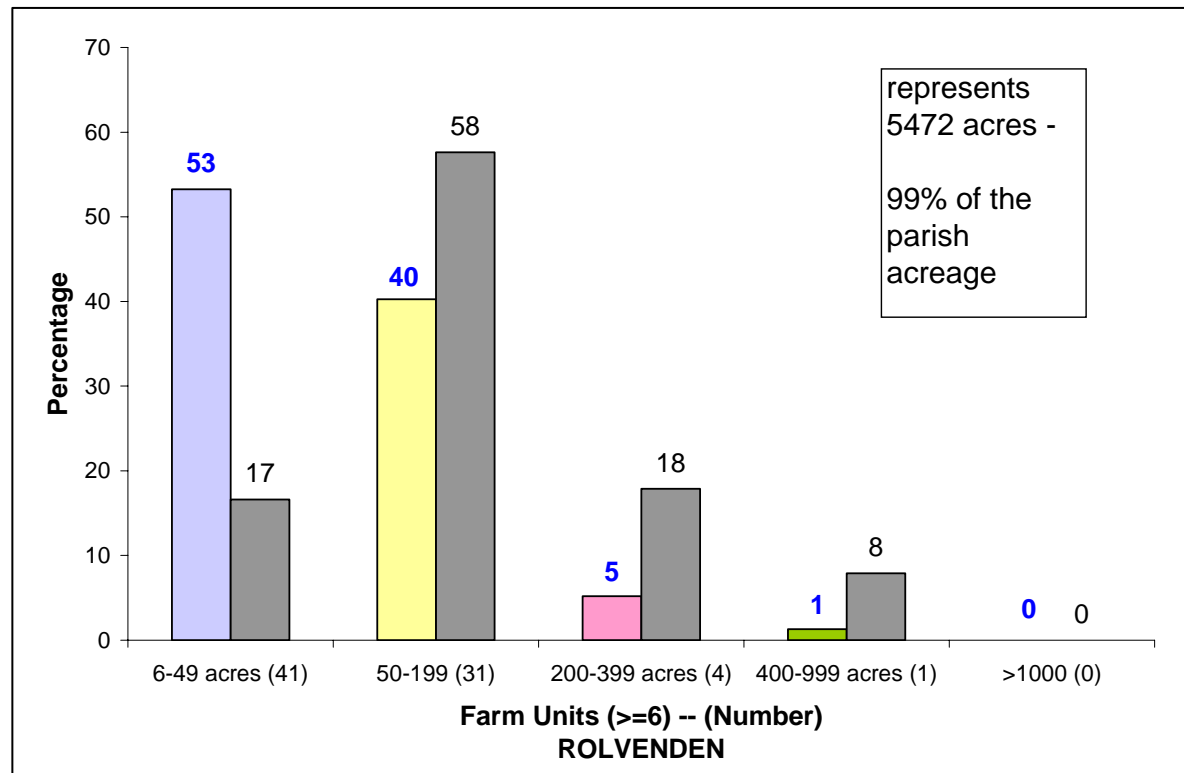
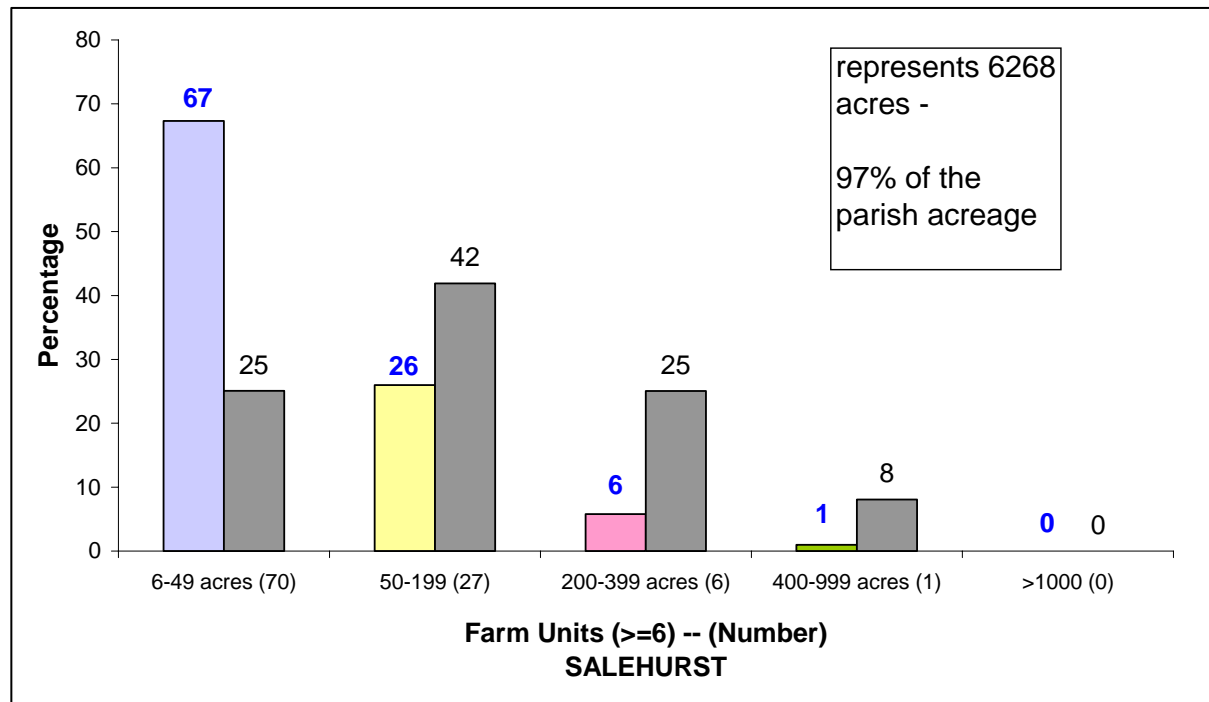
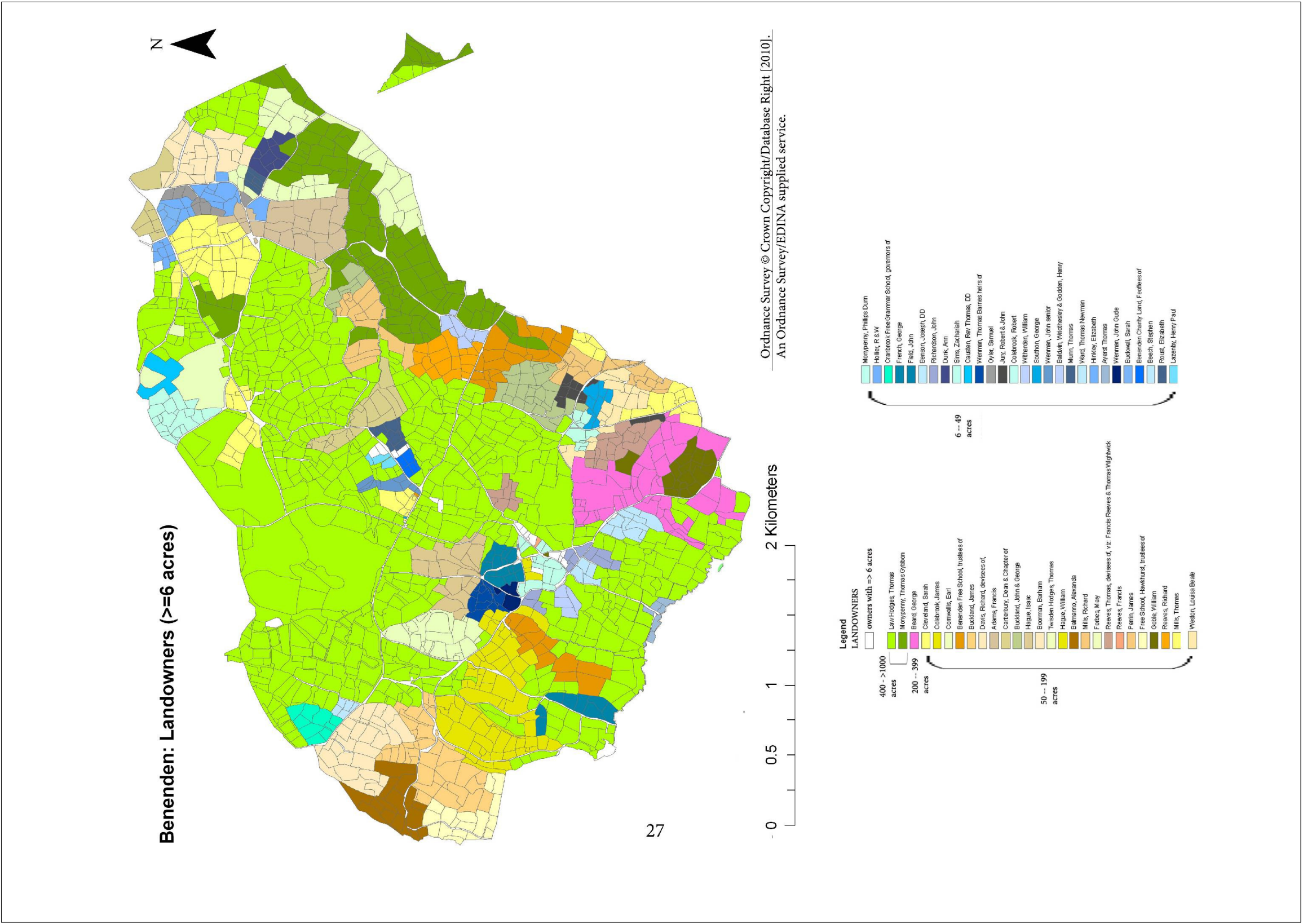


Chart 3.6 Farm Units of >= 6 acres: SALEHURST

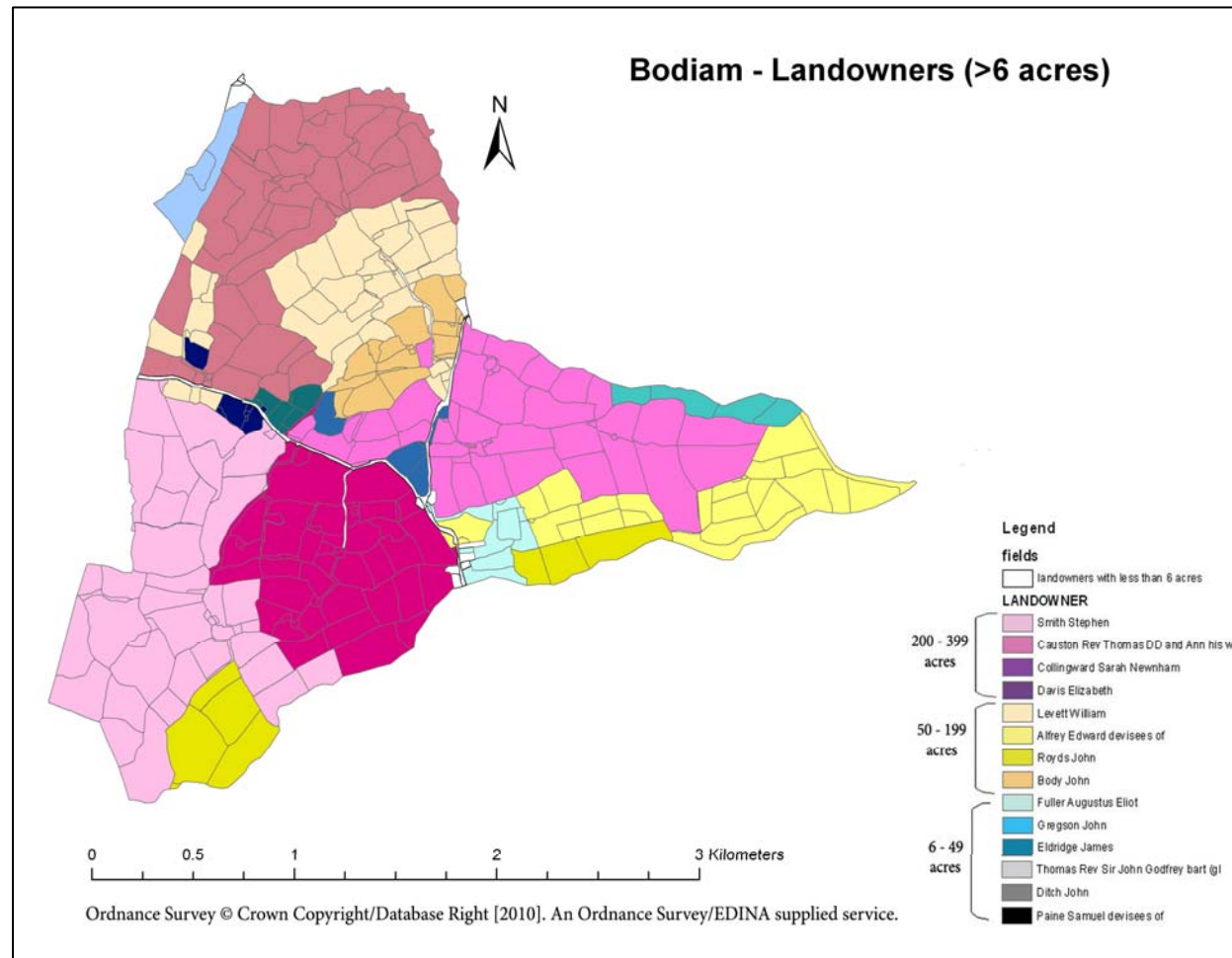
(1) Number of farm units as a percentage of all farm units in the parish; (2) compared to Farm Units by Category of Acreage >=6 acres as a percentage of Parish Acreage



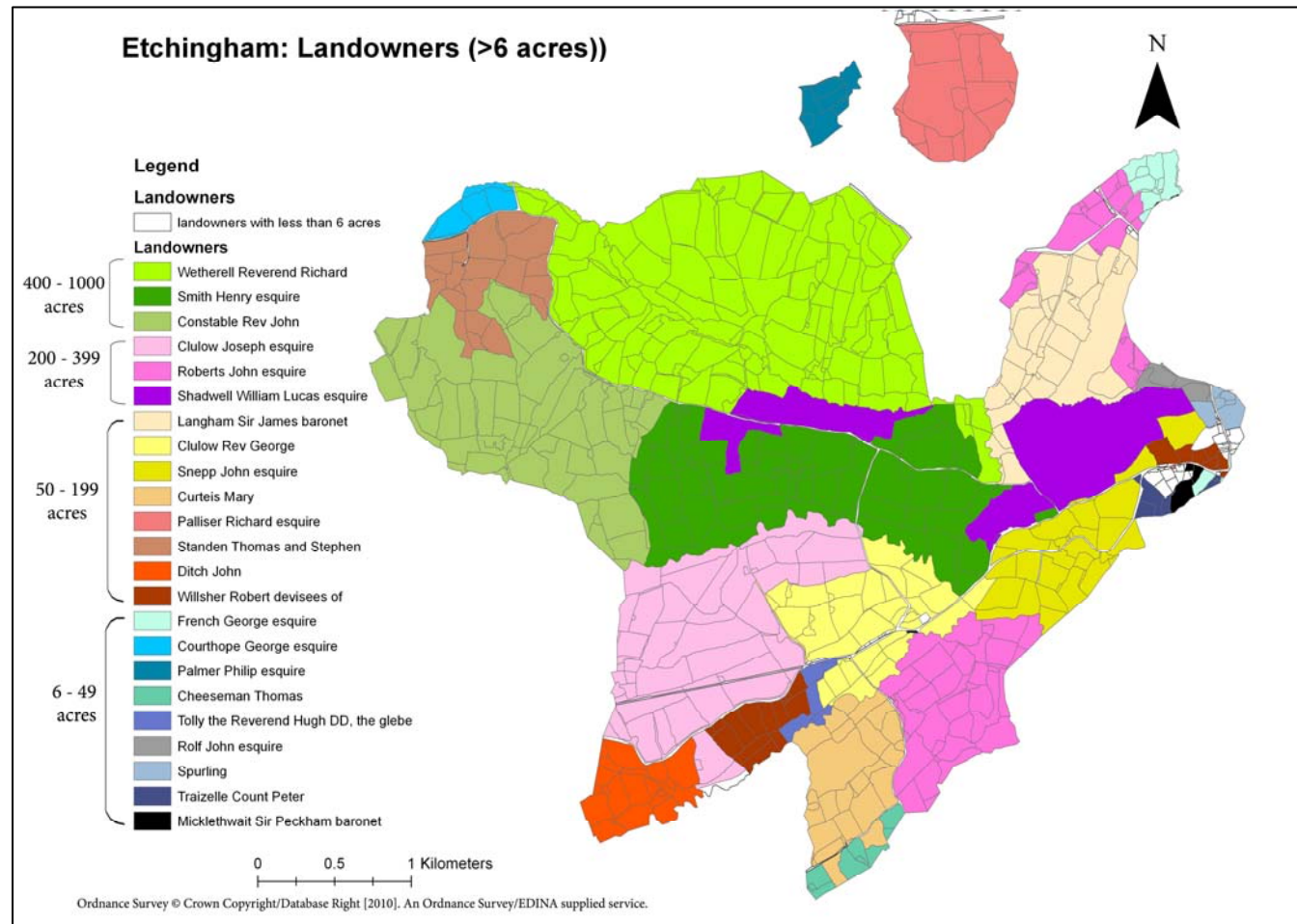
Plan 4.1 Landowners with > = 6 acres – BENENDEN



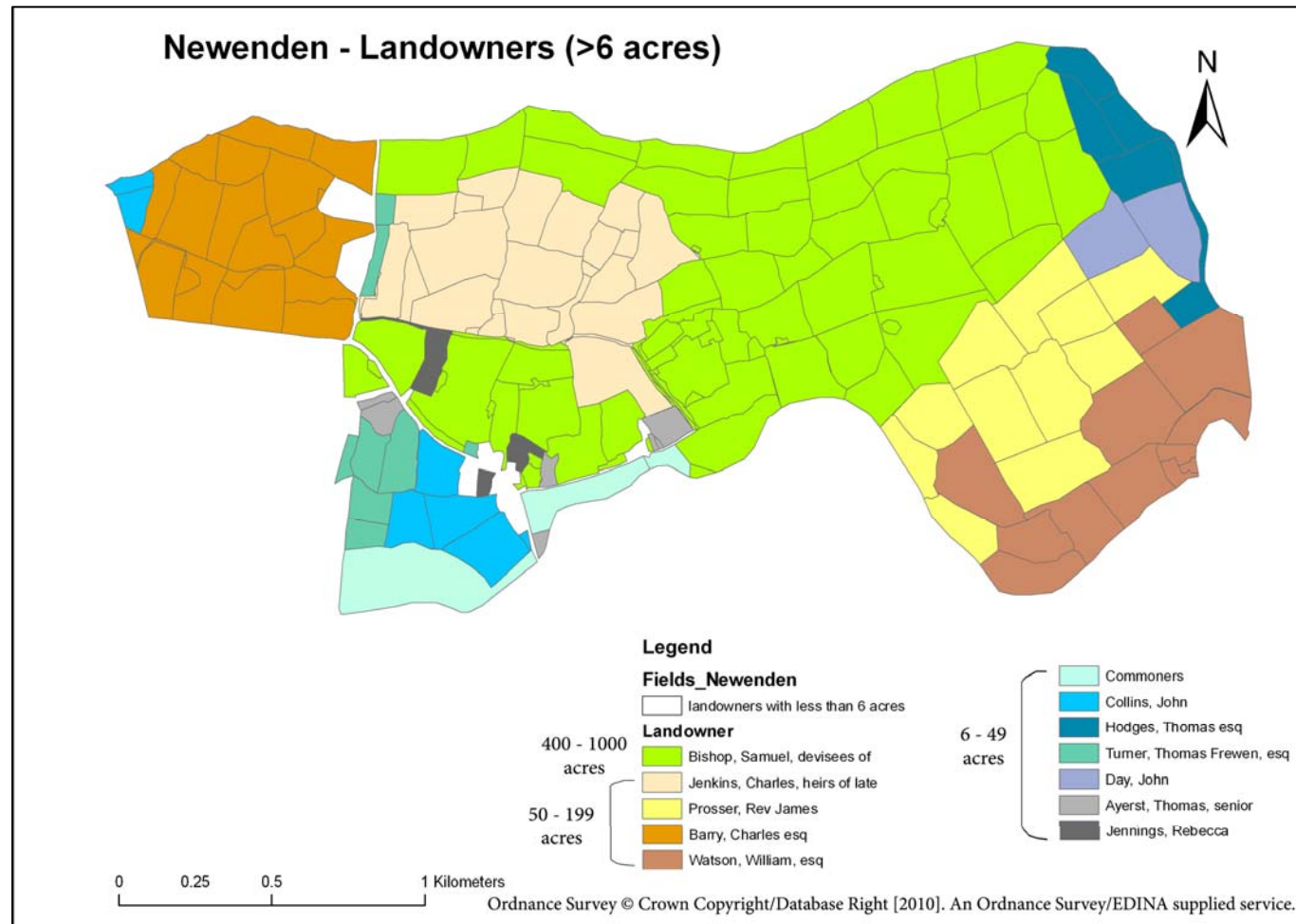
Plan 4.2 Landowners with ≥ 6 acres -- BODIAM



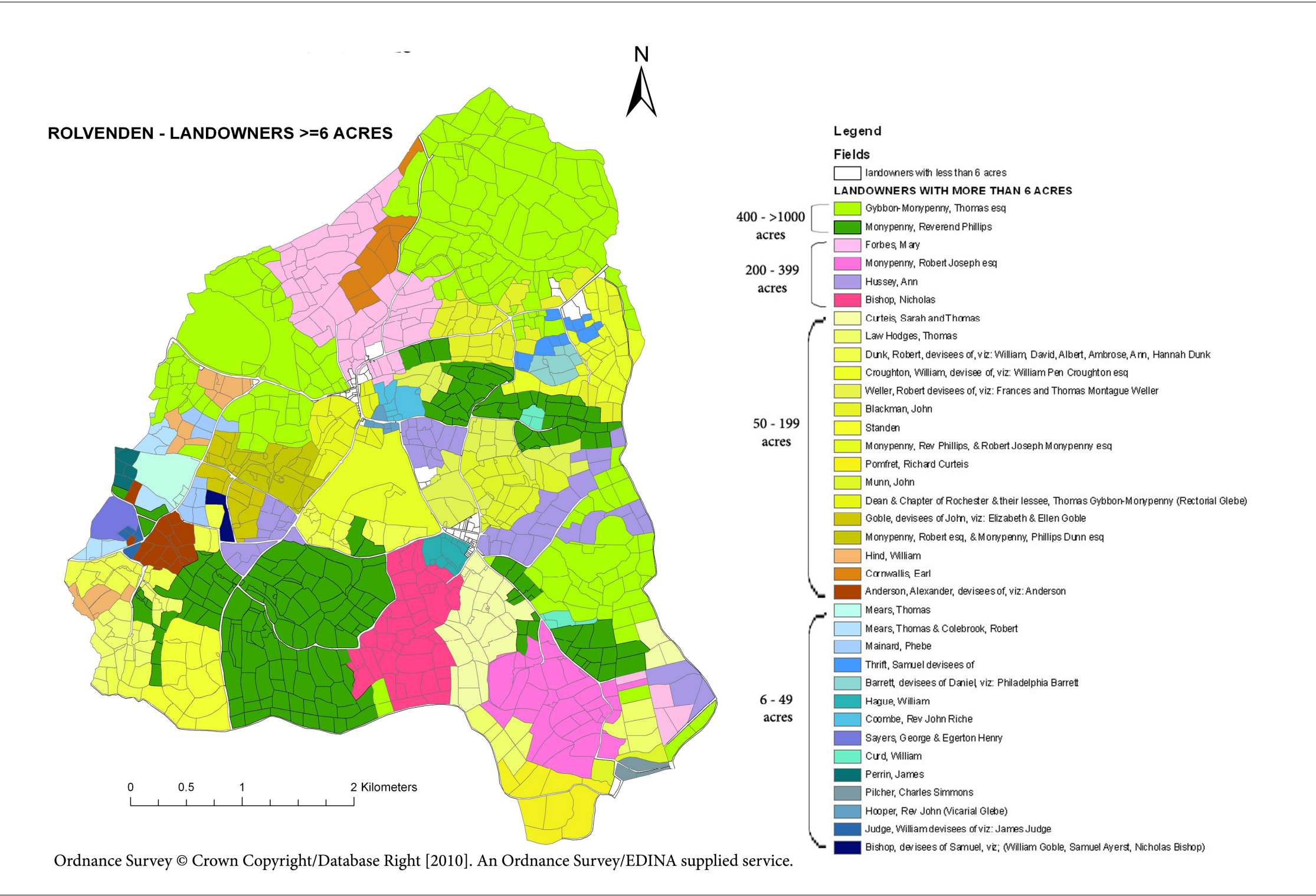
Plan 4.3 Landowners with > = 6 acres -- ETCHINGHAM



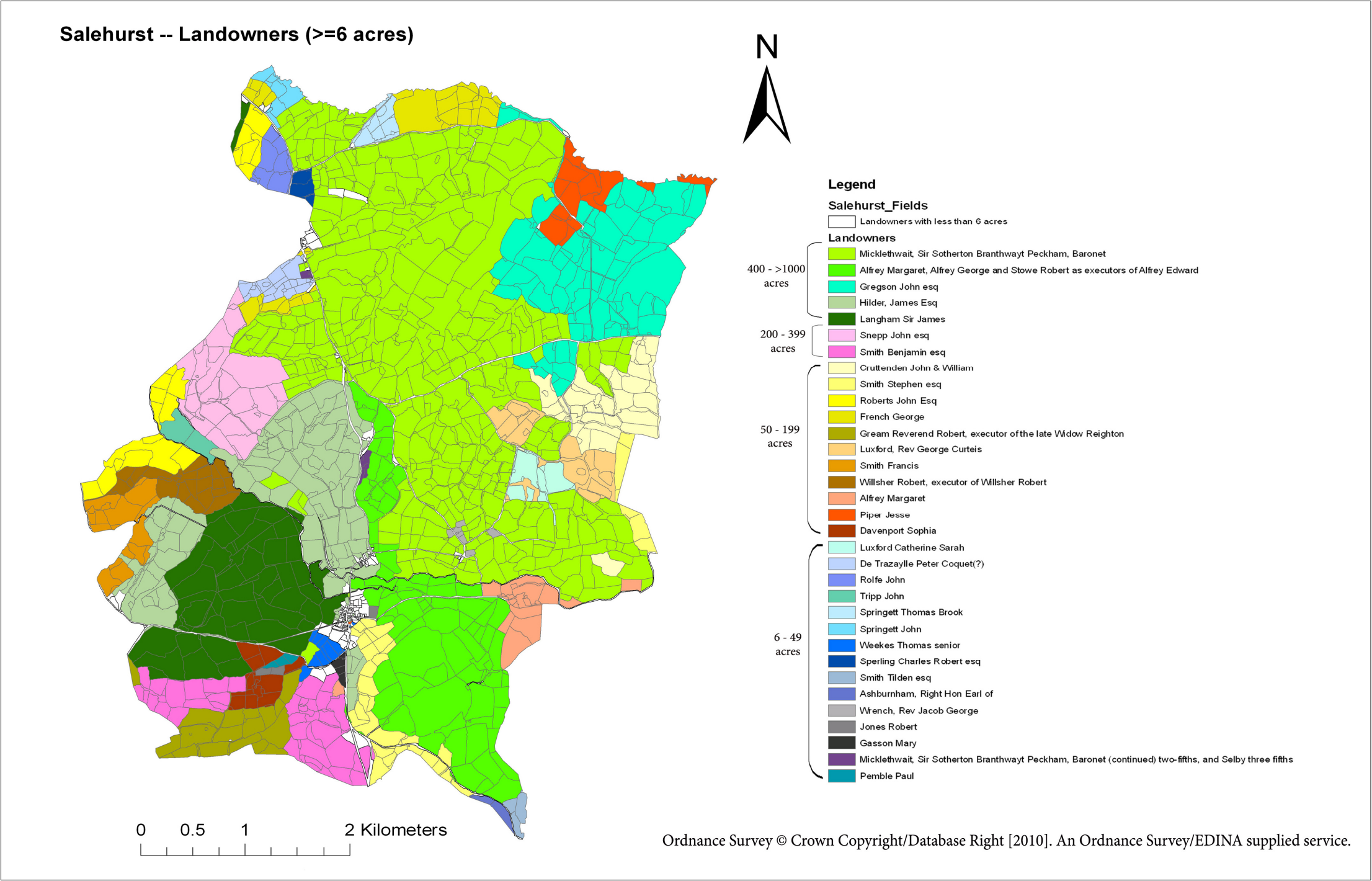
Plan 4.4 Landowners with ≥ 6 acres -- NEWENDEN



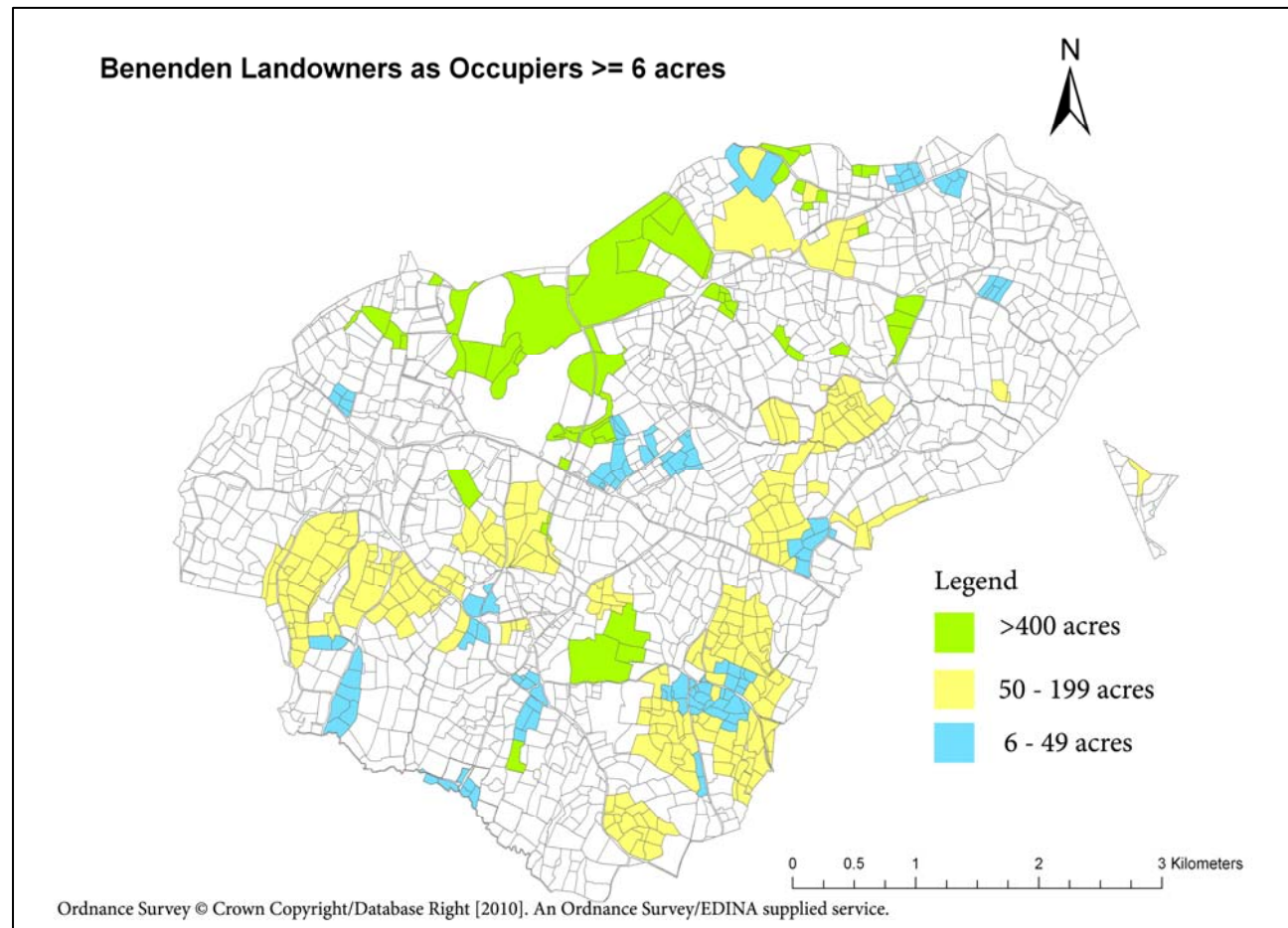
Plan 4.5 Landowners with >= 6 acres -- ROLVENDEN



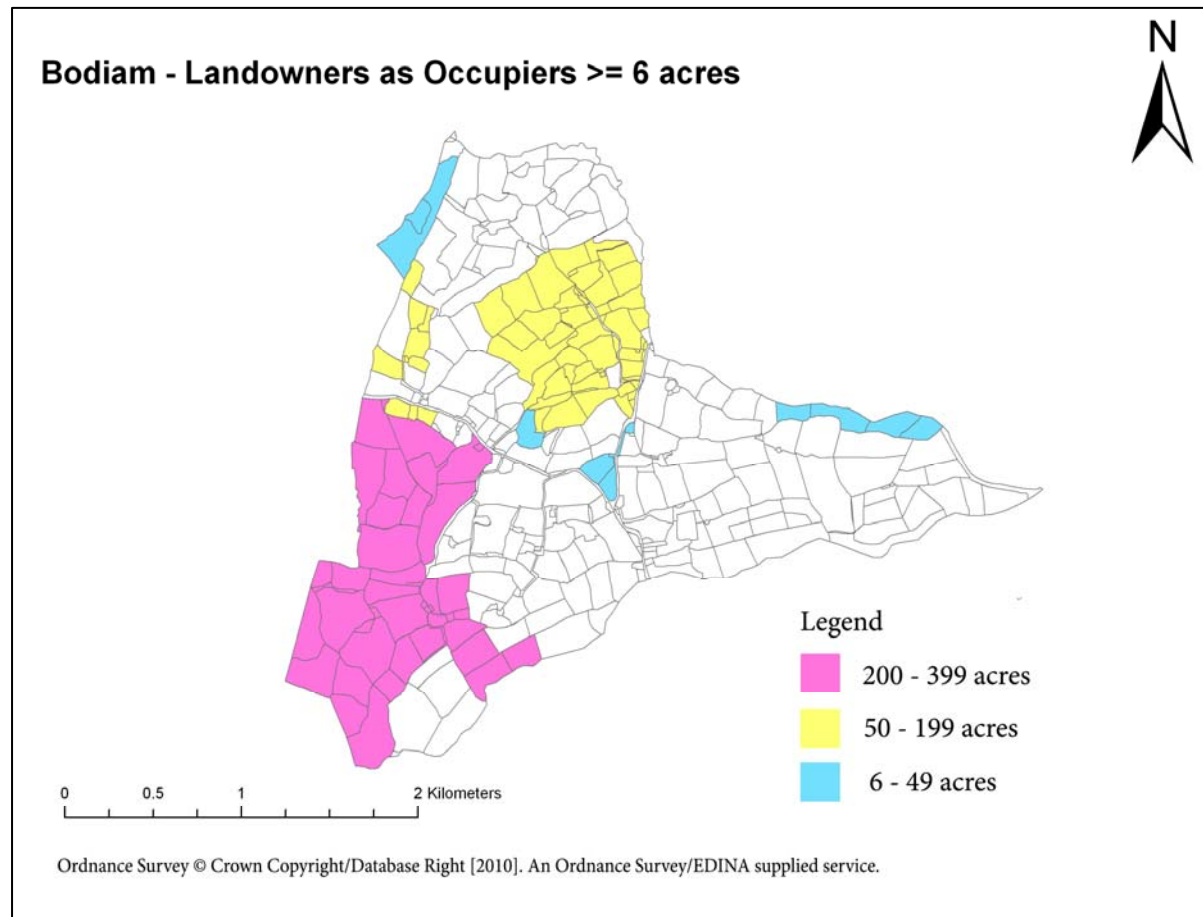
Plan 4.6 Landowners with > = 6 acres – SALEHURST



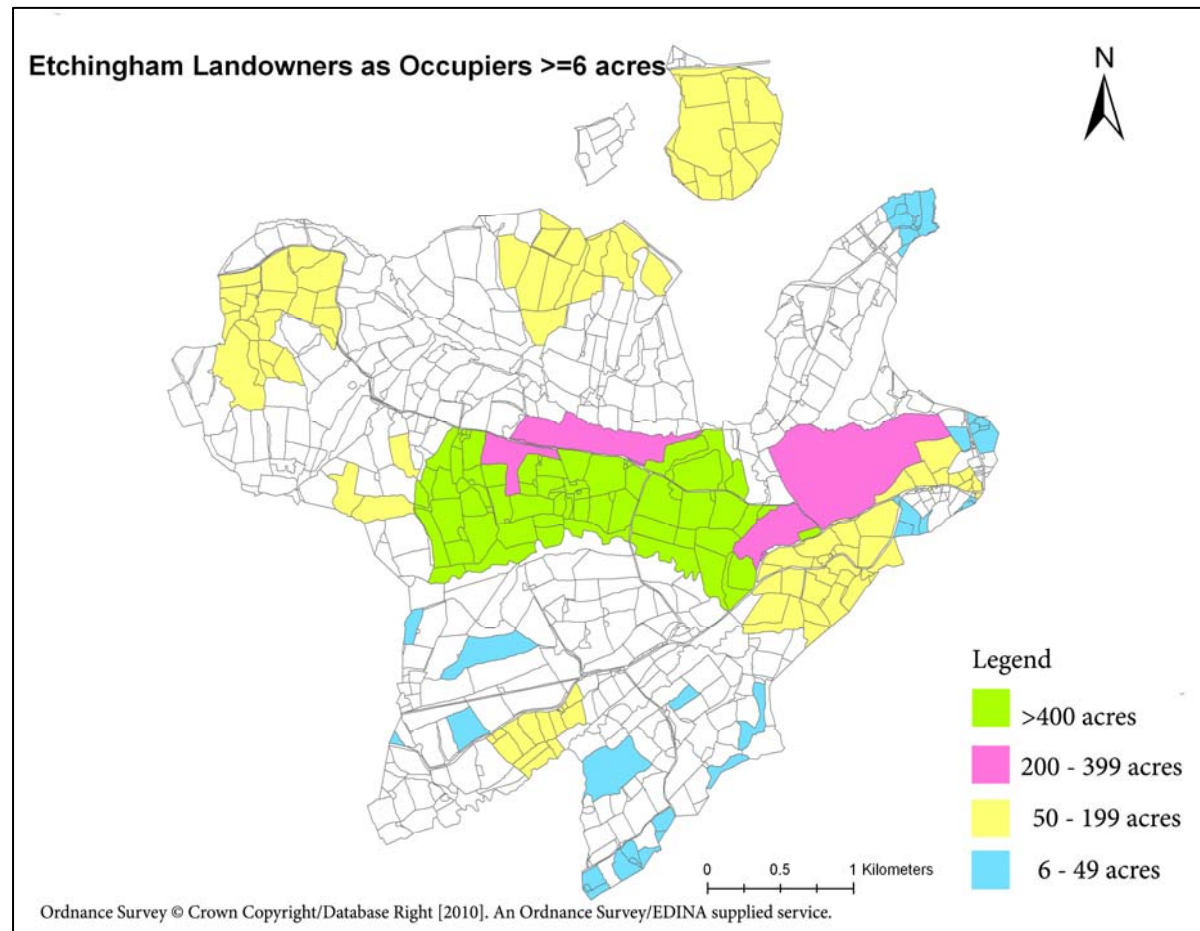
Plan 5.1 Owner-Occupiers – BENENDEN >= 6 acres



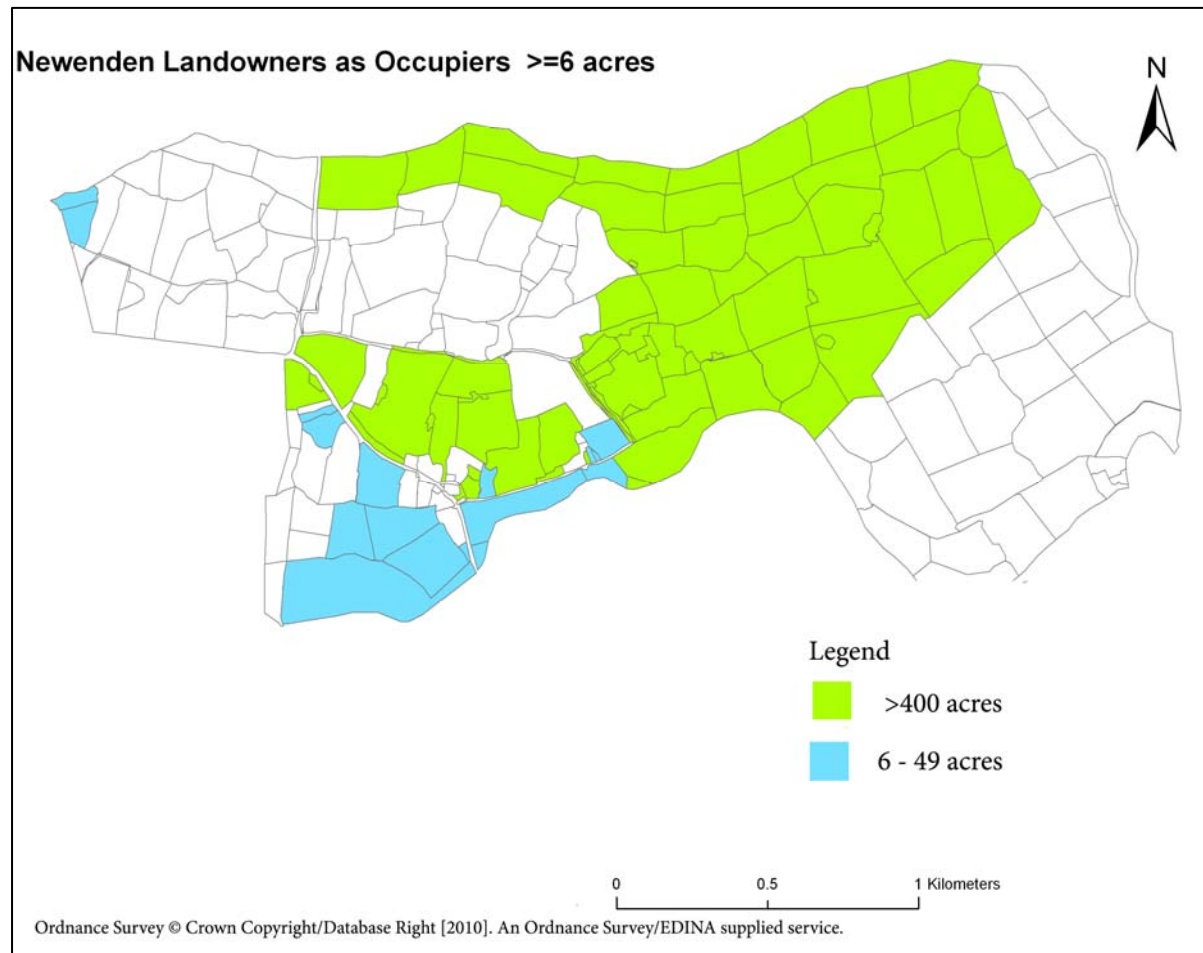
Plan 5.2 Owner-Occupiers – BODIAM ≥ 6 acres



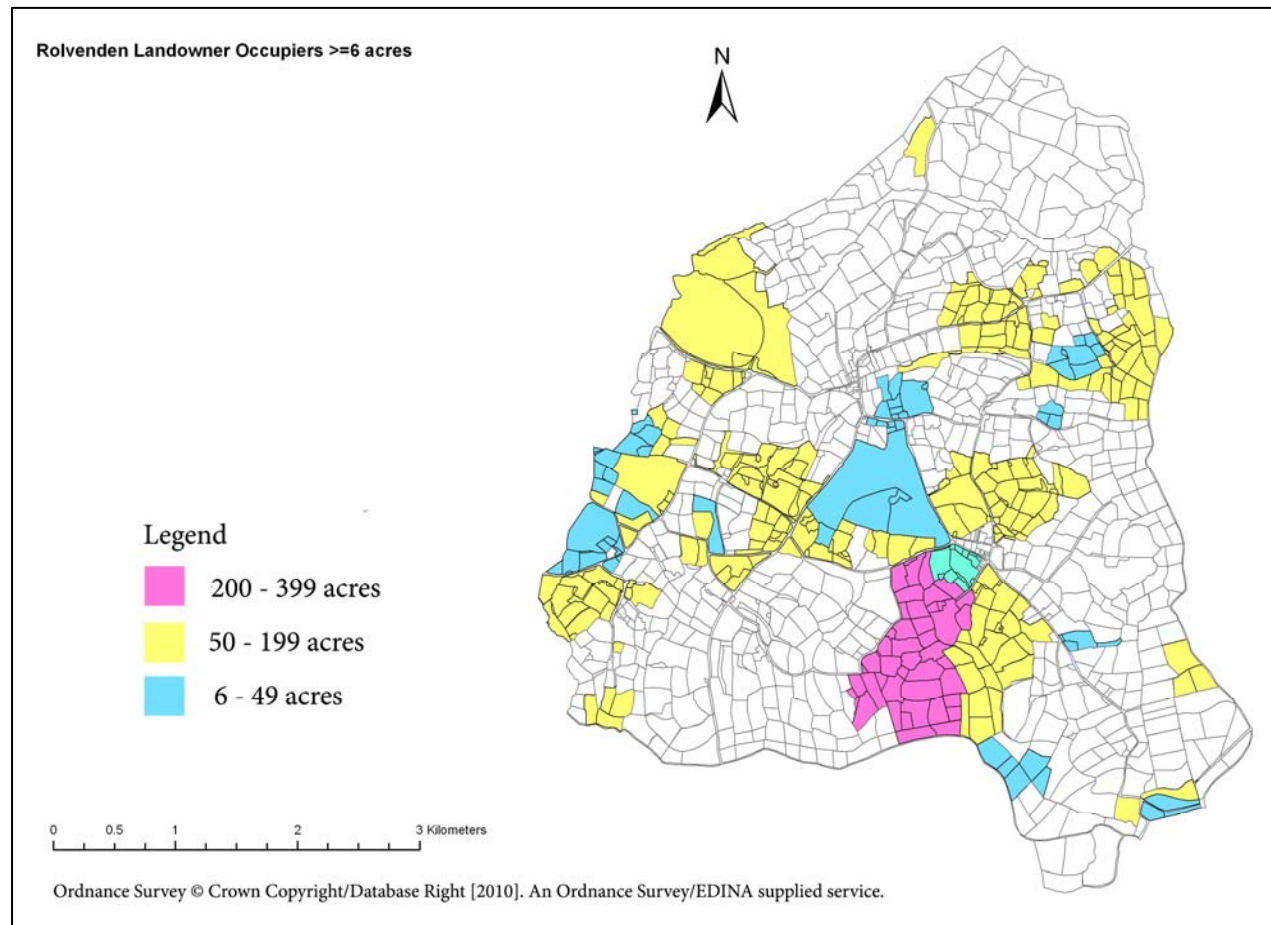
Plan 5.3 Owner-Occupiers – ETCHINGHAM ≥ 6 acres



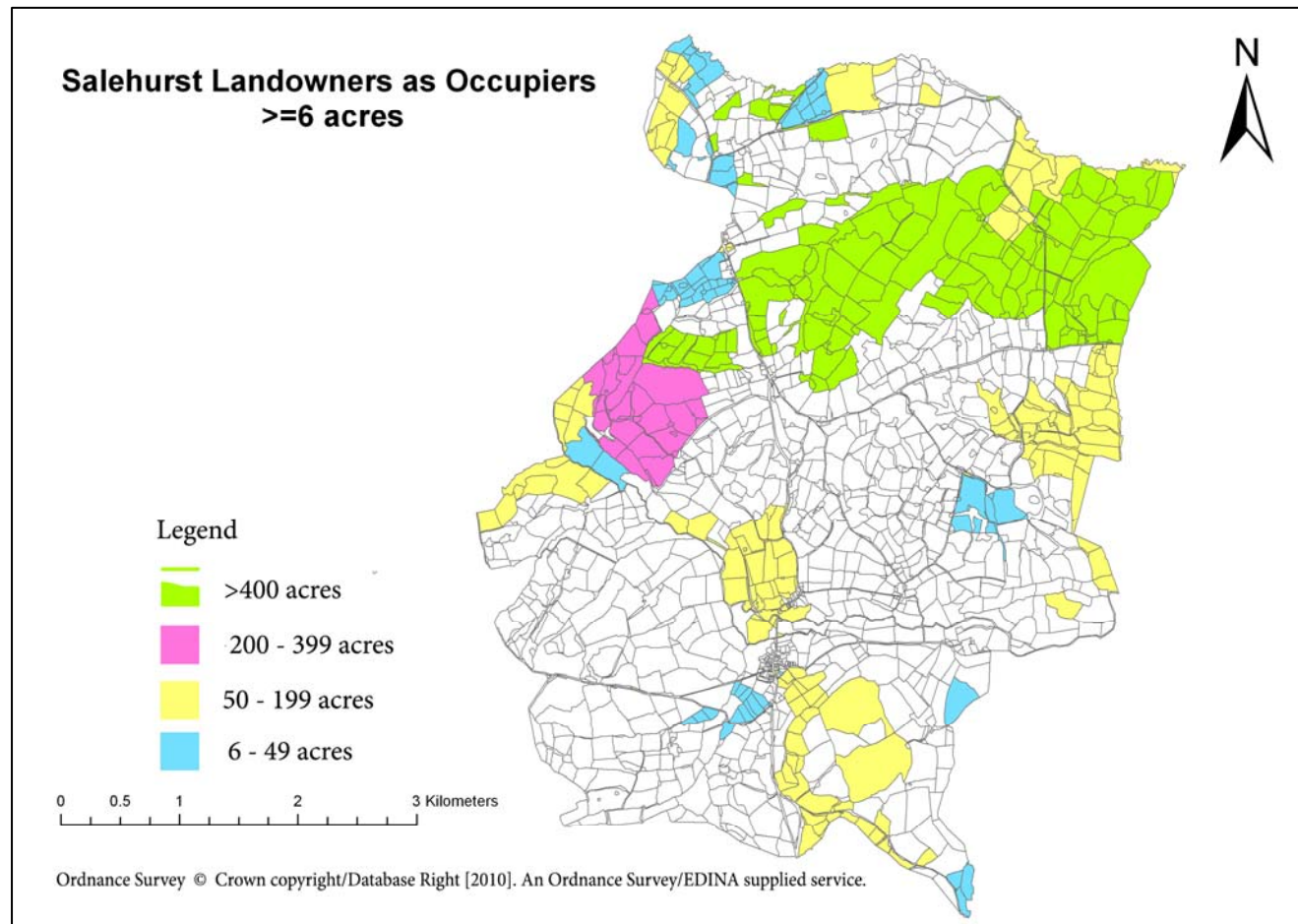
Plan 5.4 Owner-Occupiers – NEWENDEN ≥ 6 acres



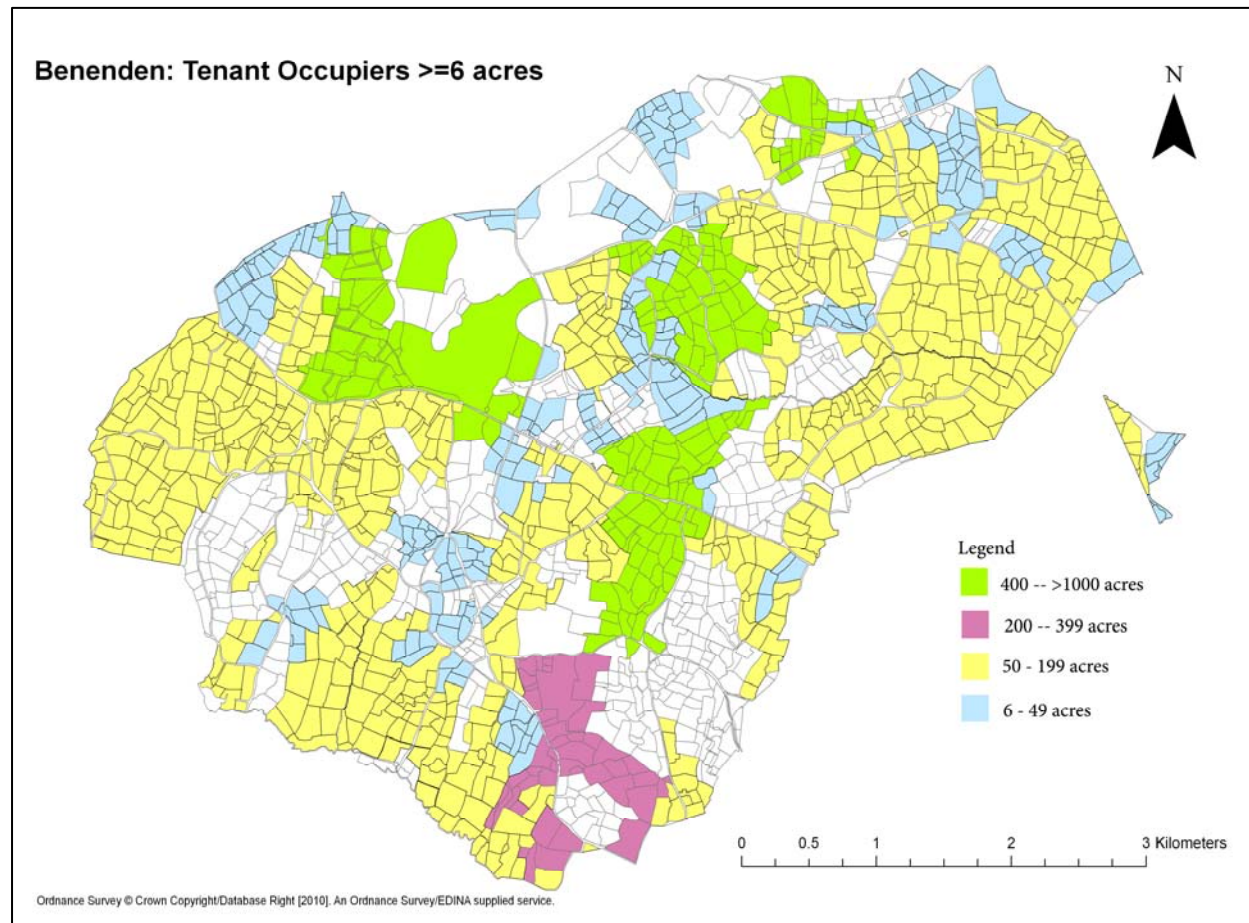
Plan 5.5 Owner-Occupiers – ROLVENDEN ≥ 6 acres



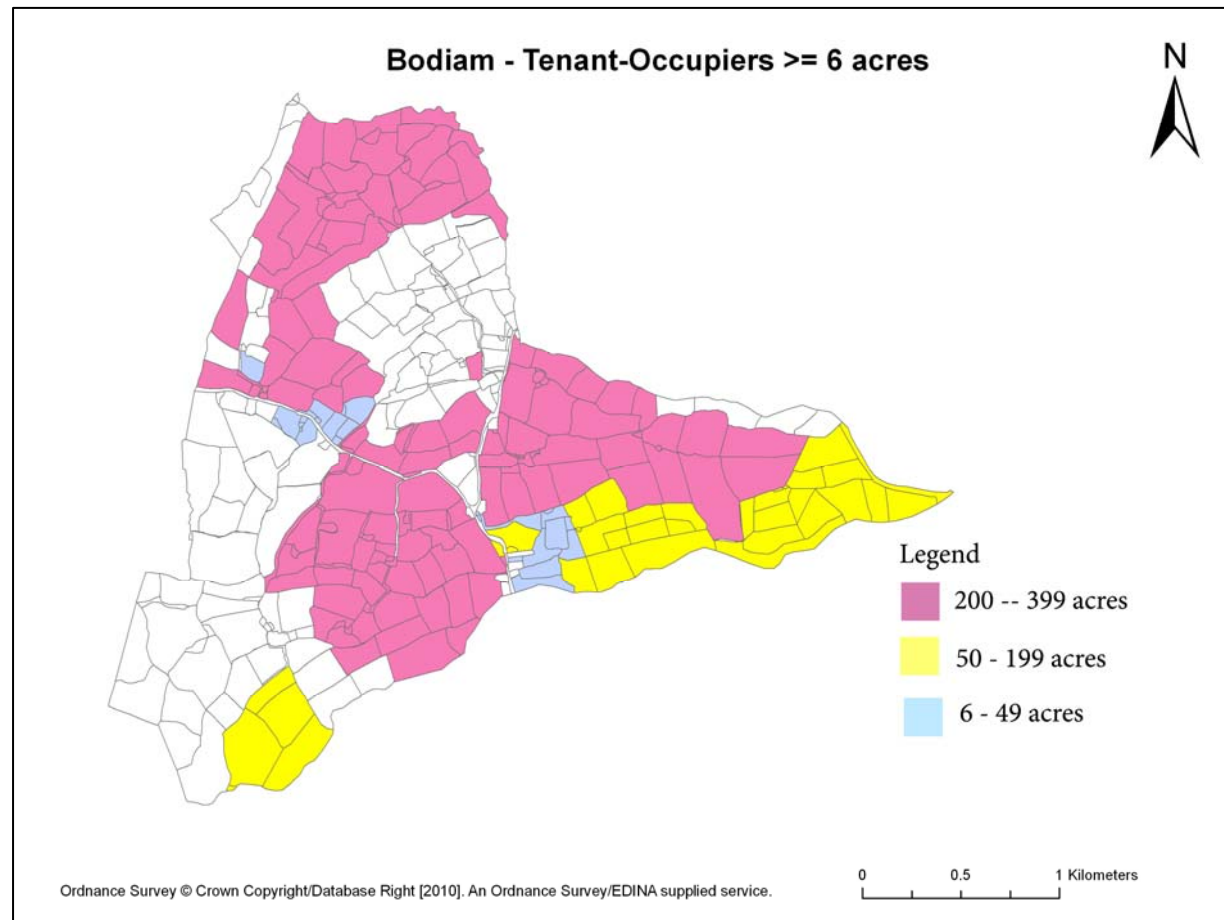
Plan 5.6 Owner-Occupiers – SALEHURST ≥ 6 acres



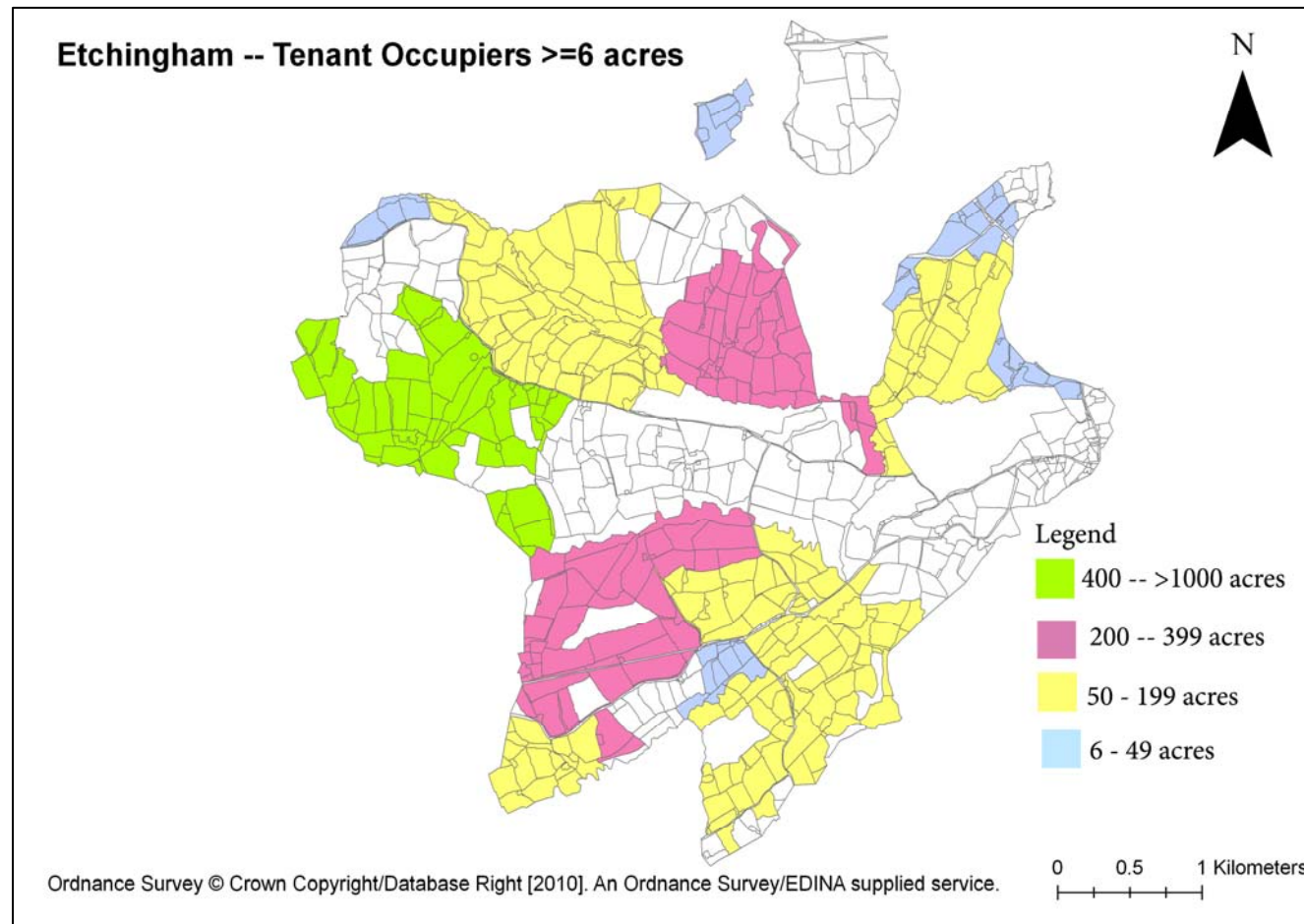
Plan 6.1 Benenden—Tenant Occupiers ≥ 6 acres



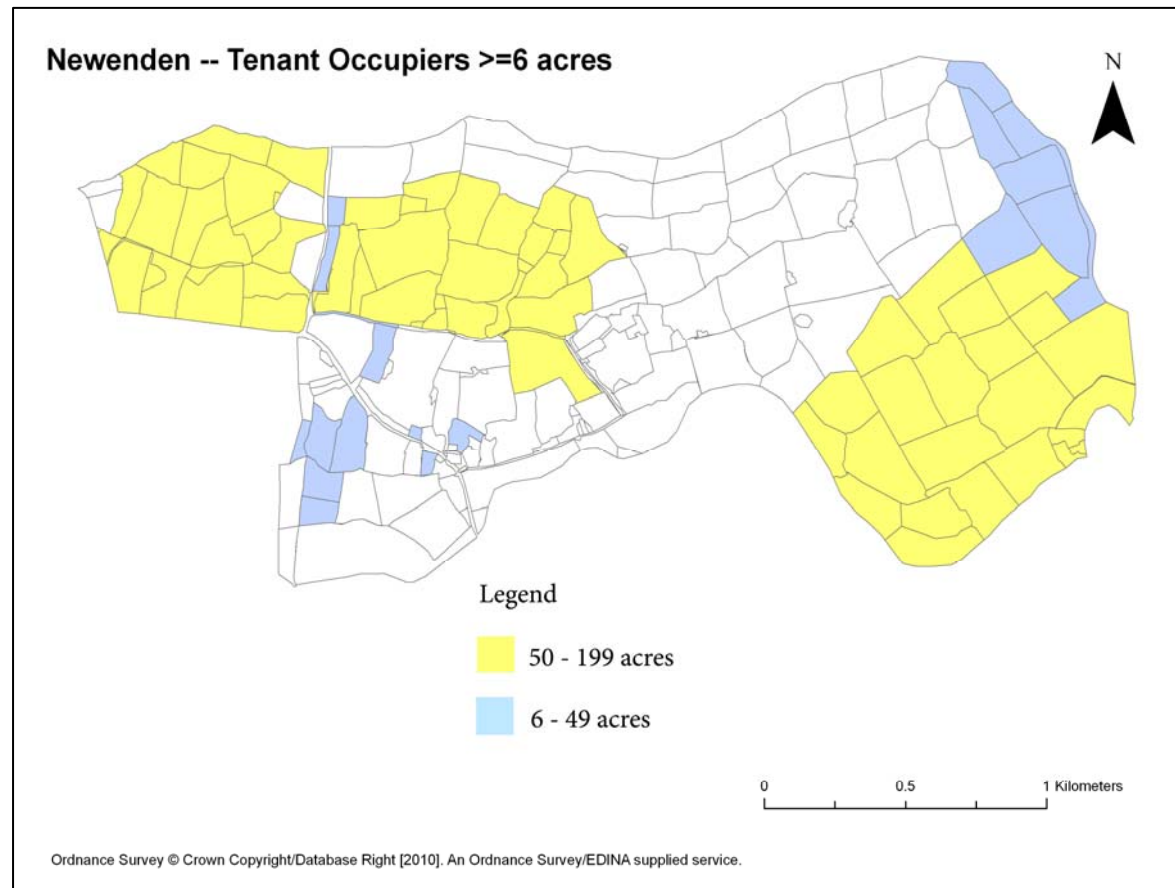
Plan 6.2 Bodiam – Tenant Occupiers >= 6 acres



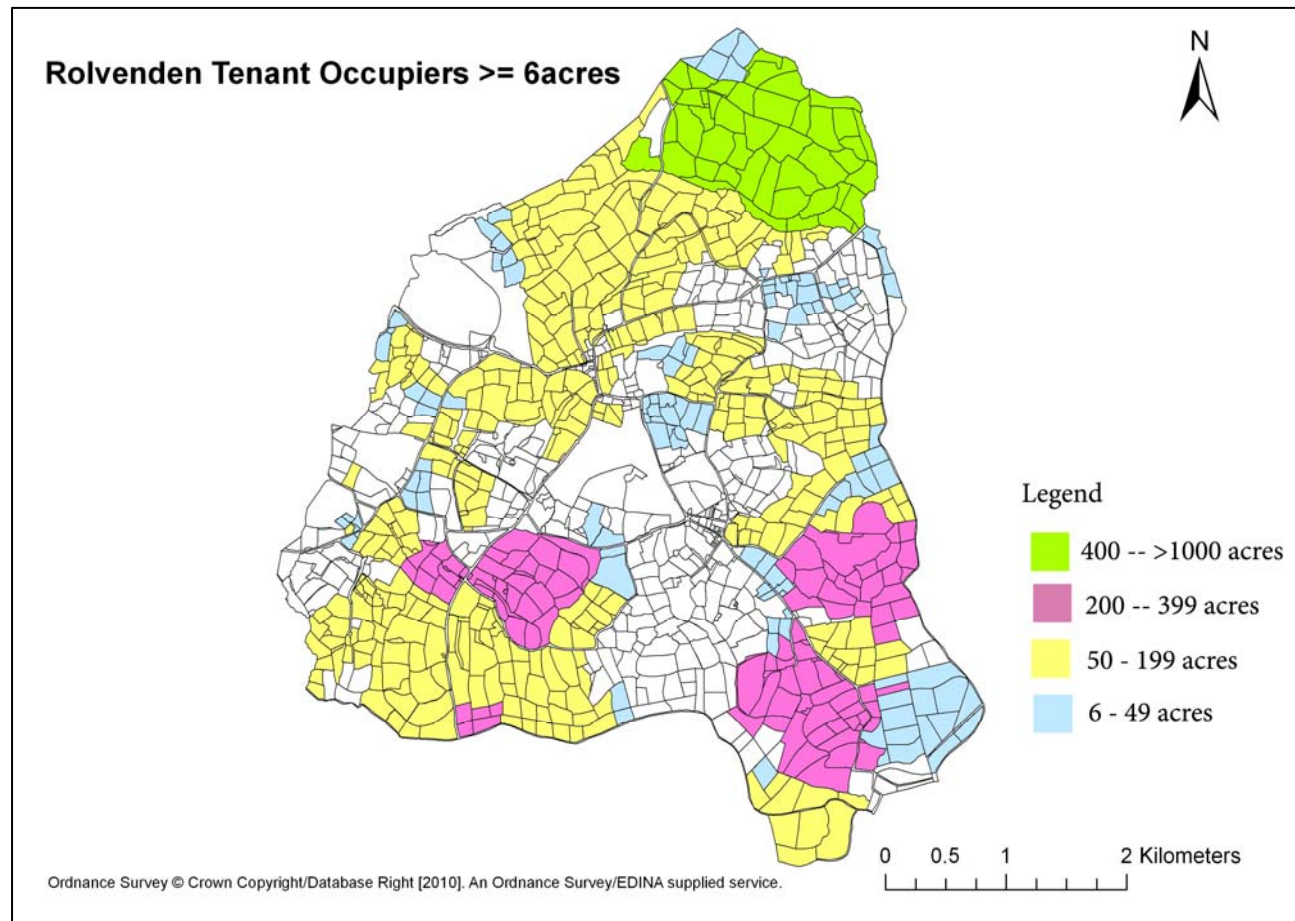
Plan 6.3 Etchingam – Tenant Occupiers ≥ 6 acres



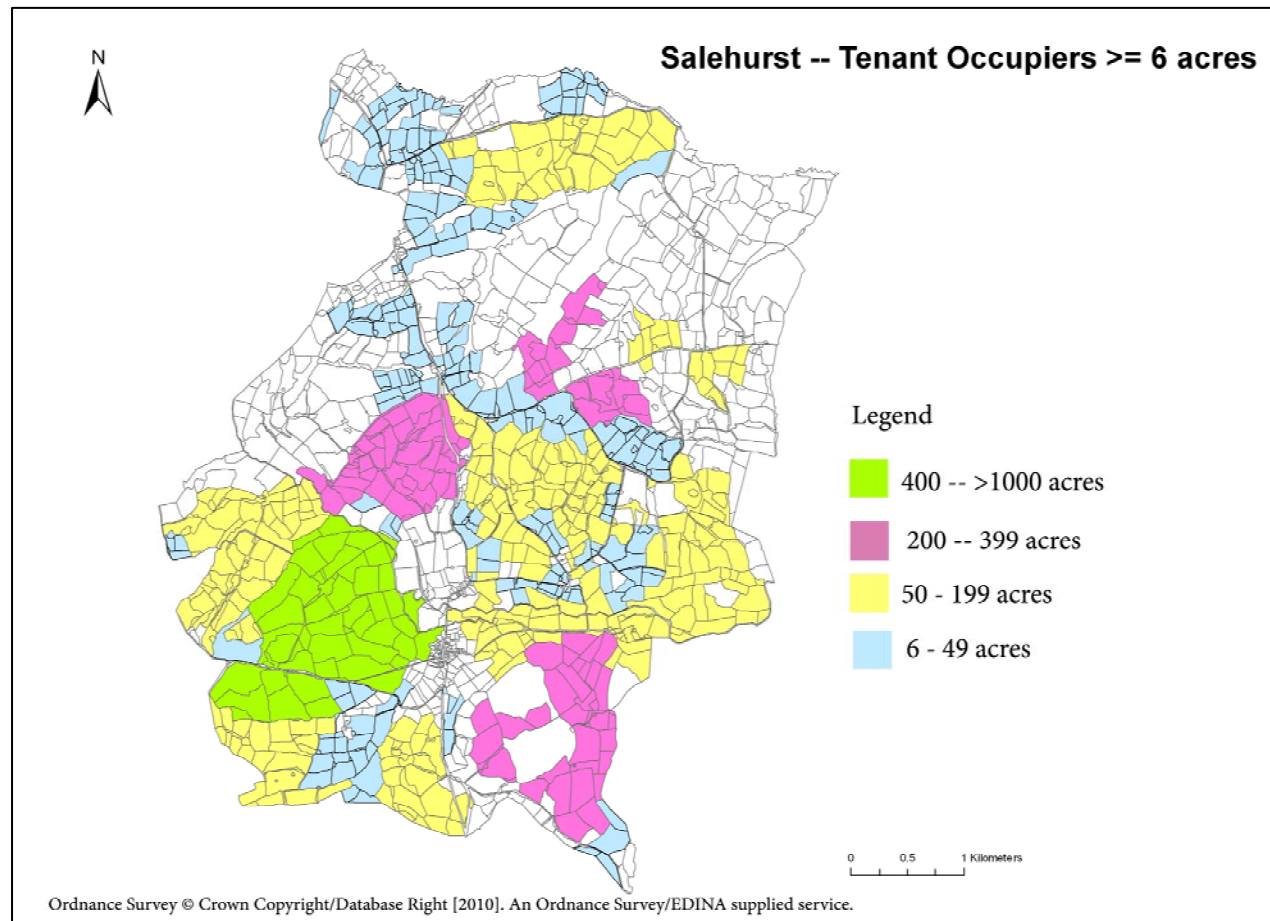
Plan 6.4 Newenden – Tenant Occupiers ≥ 6 acres



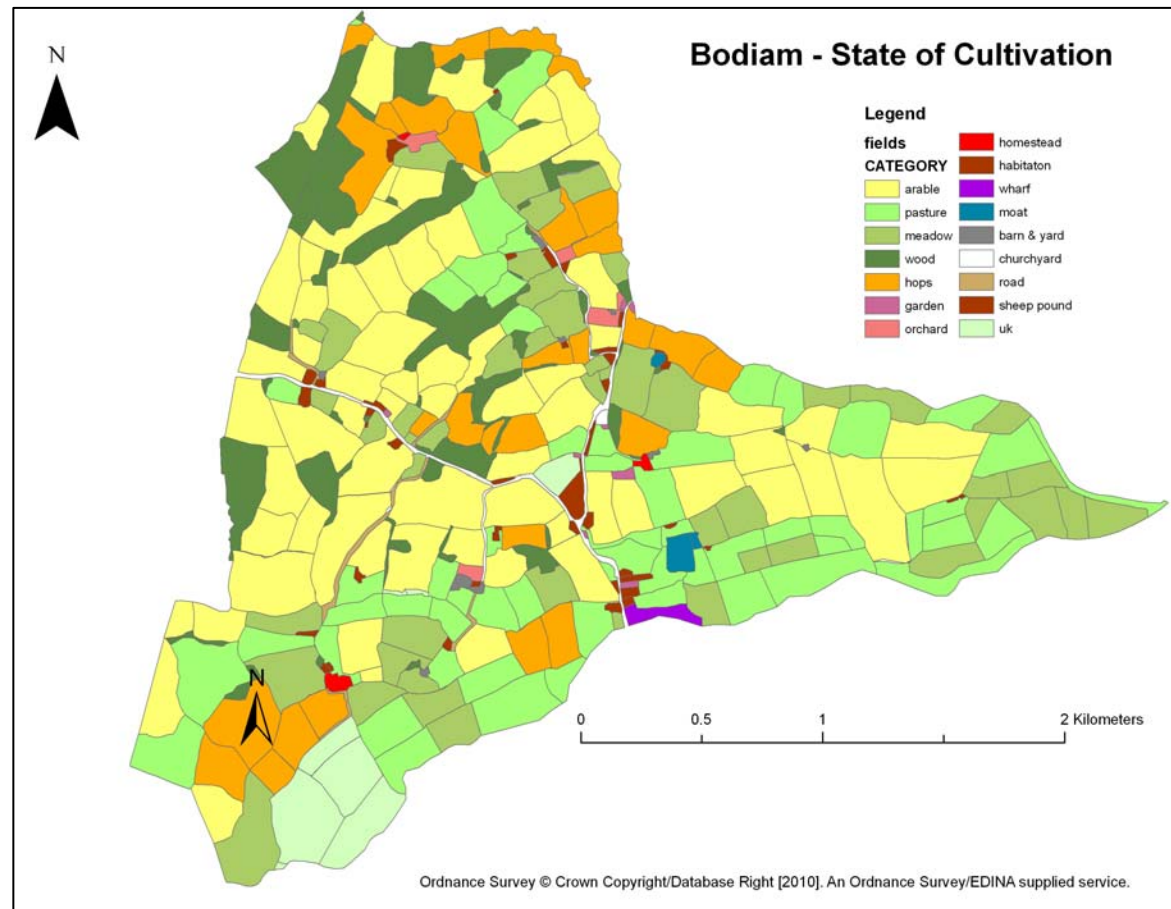
Plan 6.5 Rolvenden – Tenant Occupiers ≥ 6 acres



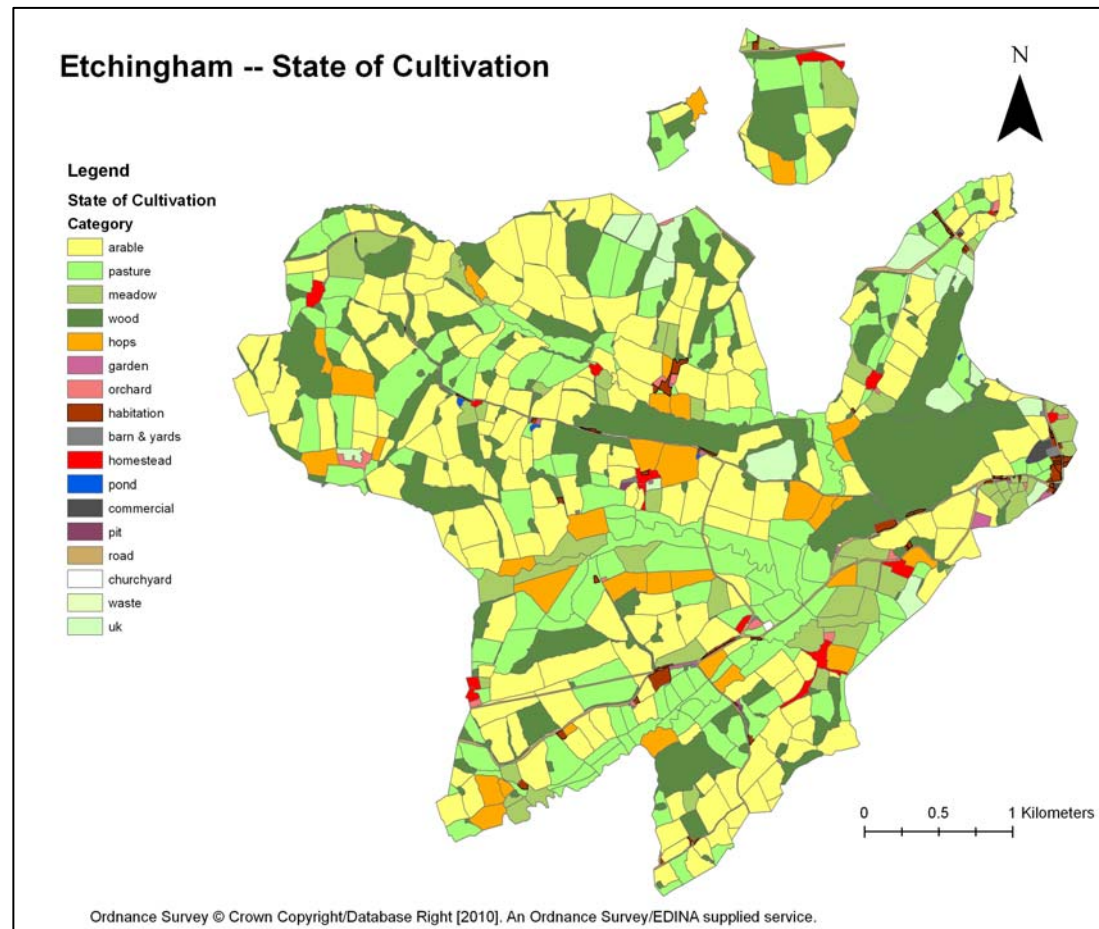
Plan 6.6 Salehurst – Tenant Occupiers >= 6 acres



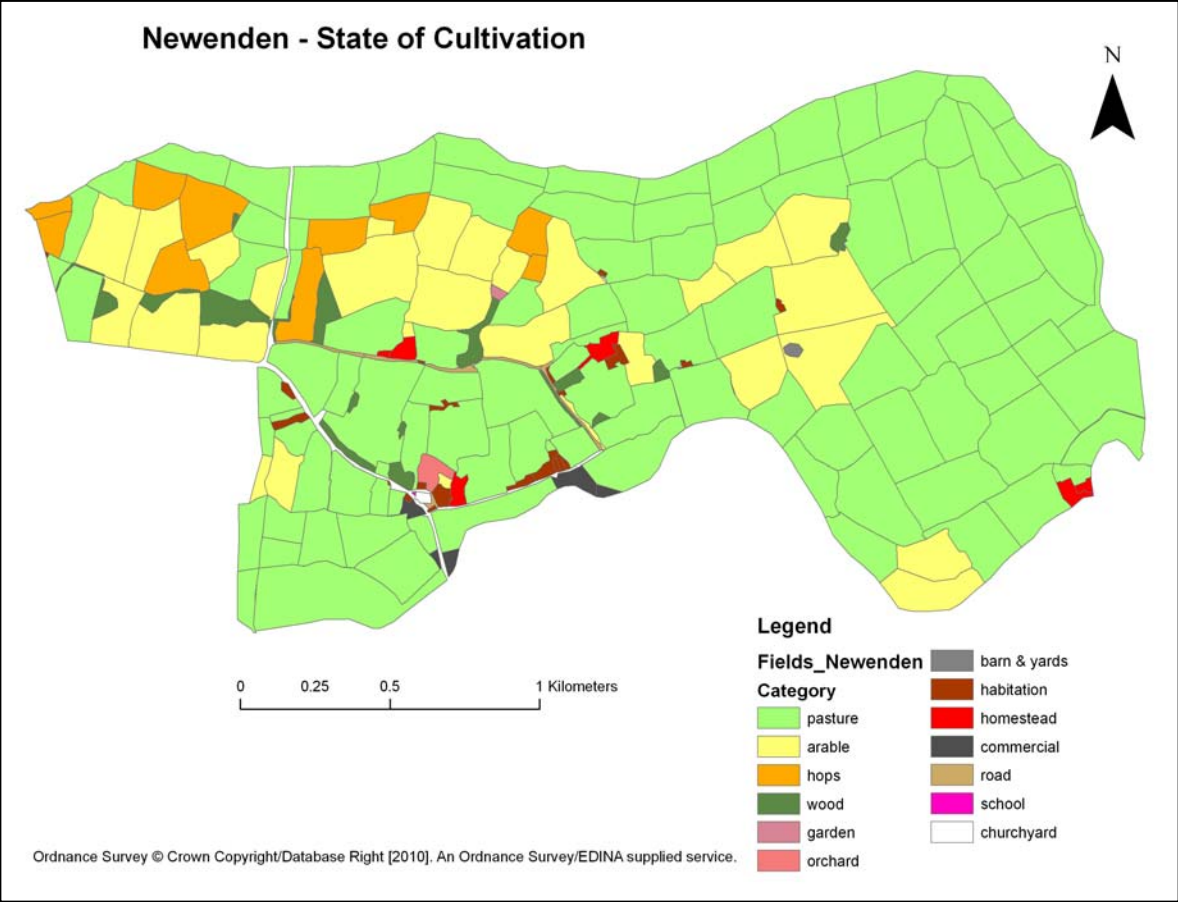
Plan 7.1 Bodiam – State of Cultivation



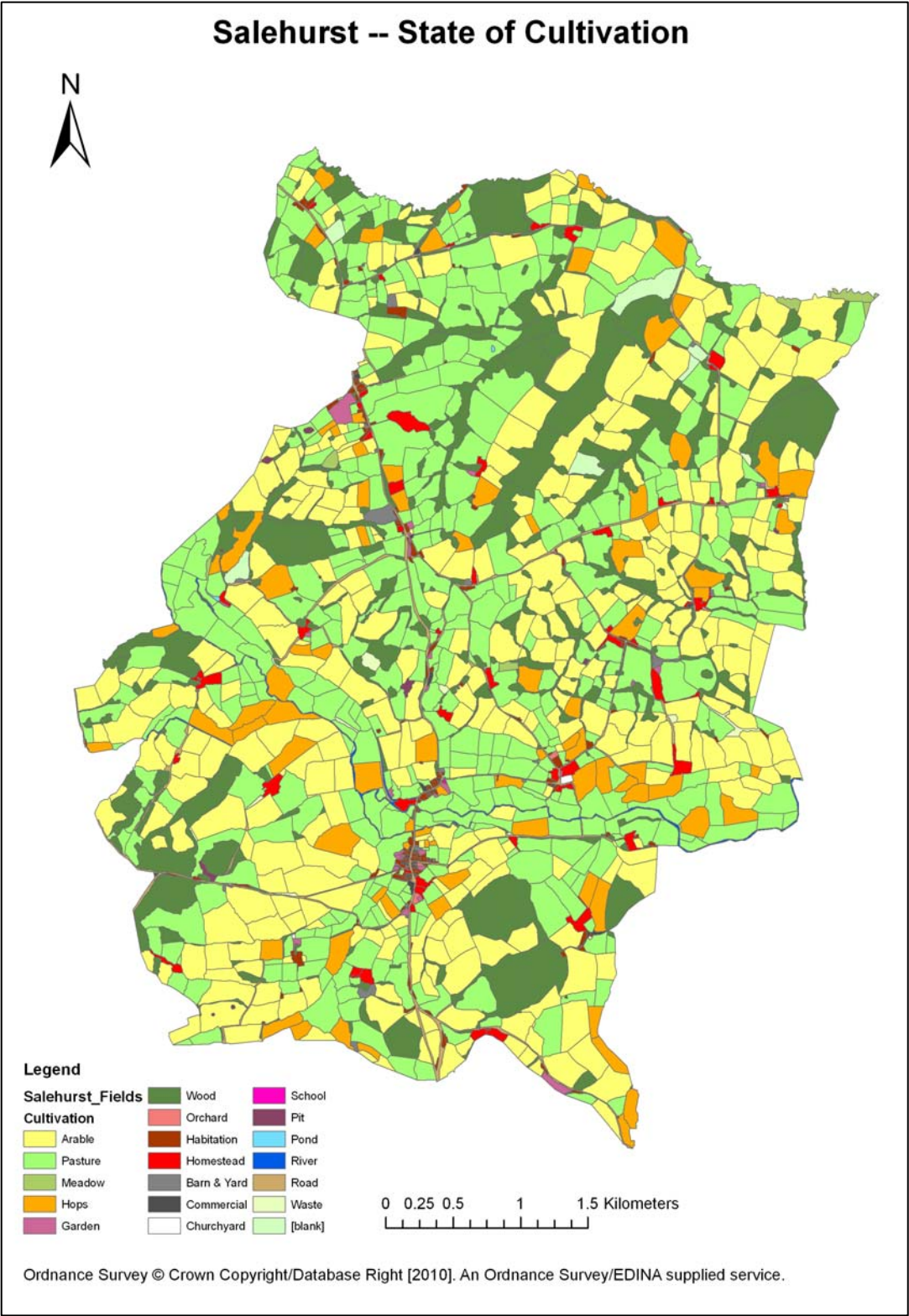
Plan 7.2 Etchingam -- State of Cultivation



Plan 7.3 Newenden – State of Cultivation



Plan 7.4 Salehurst – State of Cultivation



APPENDIX G:

THE HEMINGFORDS' CHARACTER ASSESSMENT, AN EXAMPLE FROM THE OUSE VALLEY

What follows is an analysis of the approach taken for a conservation area assessment in Huntingdonshire, which was produced by the author in 2008 based on the research conducted as part of this thesis, but written to a specification agreed with Huntingdonshire District Council. The District Council adopted the boundary review (a separate document) and the character assessment on the 2nd June 2008, following an extensive public consultation. The full document can be found on the CD that forms Appendix H¹.

PURPOSE

The Hemingfords' Conservation Area Character Assessment forms material consideration in planning control decisions affecting proposed development within the conservation area or affecting its setting. It is written with a number of different users in mind; these include the local planning authorities own development control officers and members of the development control panel. But, it is also aimed at giving guidance to developers, the owners of heritage assets in the Hemingfords and the wider public. The style in which the document is written, as well as its content, reflect its proposed usage and as far as possible technical language is avoided (although some is employed where precision requires it).

¹ May also be accessed at
www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/EnvironmentandPlanning/ConservationAreas/

Content, Presentation and Structure

The amount of information contained in a character assessment is a balance between giving too much detail (making the document unwieldy and difficult to follow) and not enough, so that the guidance it contains is insufficient or incomplete. The presentation is in an A3 format so that maps, plans and other illustrative material are easily visible when the document is printed out. The contents are structured so as to lead the reader through and enable different layers of understanding to accumulate in the reader's mind (although each topic may also be referred to separately). An introduction sets out the purpose of the document, explains what a conservation area is, records those elements that have special protection (such as historic buildings on the National List) and summarises its main topographical features (a note on enhancements is included at the back of the document). Next, a brief history of the settlement's morphology is included, alerting the reader to key morphogenic periods and significant socioeconomic considerations. The rest of the document sets out the assessment of its character.

In the analysis of its character the principal settlement areas are identified (in this instance the two villages of Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey). Each of these areas is then described in detail, identifying significant elements that contribute to their local distinctiveness, illustrated with photographs and plans. The purpose of this analysis is to make the reader aware of the elements that give character to an area, such as the principal buildings, landscape features, significant views, the contribution of trees and open spaces. Particular attention is paid to spatial relationships.

A separate section looks at building types, materials, and architectural details. This is fairly abbreviated in form, but clearly sets out the principal characteristics (Huntingdonshire also has a comprehensive analysis of all the building types found in the district, area by area, which is included as an appendix to the character assessment). A further appendix gives all the historic buildings on the National List (at that time, Huntingdonshire did not have a Local List). The final section summarises the design elements that should be taken into account when considering any new development. This contains information 'street by street' on the relationship between buildings with other buildings and how they 'sit' in their curtilages (that is the grain and plot analysis). An assessment of visual quality is made, summarising architectural and spatial observations, reprising relevant morphological features, and conveying how the viewer experiences the scene.

The approach taken for the Hemingfords' character assessment combines the details taken from research into the morphological history of the settlements with contemporary observation of the site. It utilizes the plan view where appropriate, but describes character from the ground. It is, however, only one of a number of possible approaches, but one that proved successful in practice.

APPENDIX H

The Hemingfords Boundary review and Character Assessment

The documents presented in this appendix were produced by the author for Huntingdonshire District Council in 2008 as part of a major review of its conservation areas. The procedure involved a review of existing boundaries based on a guidance document that the authority had previously commissioned from the author. A character assessment was then written to a broad design specified by the authority for use by development control officers, developers, and members of the public with an interest in the management of the conservation area. Following a period of public consultation, Huntingdonshire's cabinet, on the 12th June 2008, adopted both the boundary review and the character assessment for the Hemingfords as material consideration for planning purposes.

When producing the character assessment for the Hemingfords, the author used the results of the research then being conducted for this thesis. Albeit at an early stage, and prior to the final form of the narrative being written, the degree of information required was established in this exercise within a practical forum, and lessons learnt that have proved to be invaluable. The author would like to thank Huntingdonshire District Council for the opportunity to test the methodology in a real life situation.

Guidance Document

The Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries In Huntingdonshire



Operational Services - Planning

Huntingdonshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

www.huntsdc.gov.uk

Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries Guidance Document

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Huntingdonshire has many fine historic buildings and much remarkably good landscape. However, this heritage is particularly important in the unique way that these elements relate to one another in the towns and villages of the District. It is not surprising that Huntingdonshire has sixty-three Conservation Areas.
- 1.2** The first of these were designated over thirty years ago and their boundaries have not been systematically reviewed subsequently. This guidance document is about the way that future reviews will be undertaken.
- 1.3** There is an existing programme for producing character statements for conservation areas. It is envisaged that boundary review will be co-ordinated with this programme.
- 1.4** Each of the criteria to be used for the review of the boundaries (which are the core of the document) is illustrated by a practical example drawn from within the District. However, these examples are there solely to demonstrate what the application of the criteria may mean in practice in order to aid understanding of the process.

Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries Guidance Document

2 THE STATUTORY BASIS FOR REVIEW

- 2.1** The statutory basis for review is Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Area) Act 1990. This states that:-

"It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas: and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly."

- 2.2** Government policy on how that duty should be exercised is stated in Policy Planning Guidance 15 (PPG 15) issued jointly by the Department for the Environment and the Department of National Heritage in September 1994. Policies for conservation areas are contained in part one, section 4.

- 2.3** PPG 15 paragraph 4.4 refers local planning authorities for more detailed advice to English Heritage's guidance note *"Conservation Area Practice"* (1993, revised 1995)

- 2.4** There have been a number of milestone rulings in the Courts that influence the interpretation and the administration of the law. These have been taken into account.¹

- 2.5** The key points relevant to the review in PPG15 are as follows:-

- (i) It is the quality and interest of area, which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas (PPG 15 paragraph 4.2);
- (ii) Local planning authorities should seek to establish consistent local standards for the designation of conservation areas and should periodically review existing conservation areas and their boundaries against those standards (PPG 15 paragraph 4.3);
- (iii) The definition of an area's special interest should derive from an assessment of the elements that contribute to (and detract from) it (PPG 15 paragraph 4.4);
- (iv) Designation is not likely to be appropriate as a means of protecting landscape features, except where they form an integral part of the historic built environment...The Courts have held that it is legitimate in appropriate circumstances to include within a conservation area the setting of buildings that form part of that area....Designation may well, however, be suitable for historic parks and gardens and other areas of historic landscape containing structures that contribute to their special interest and that fall within the categories subject to conservation area control (PPG 15 paragraph 4.6);
- (v) There is no statutory requirement to consult prior to designation or cancellation of designation, but it will be highly desirable that there should be consultation with local residents, business and other local interests over both the identification of areas and the definition of their boundaries (PPG 15 paragraph 4.7).

- 2.6** Paragraphs 4.14 to 4.20 of PPG 15 deal with the use of planning powers in conservation areas. A reading of these paragraphs make it clear that conservation areas will contain elements that are either neutral or even negative in the contribution that they make to the area, What is important is the "controlled and positive management of change" (PPG 15 paragraph 4.16).

¹ The main rulings have resulted from the following cases: R v Swansea CC *ex parte* Elitestone Ltd (1992); R v Canterbury DC *ex parte* Halford (1992) v Surrey CC *ex parte* Oaktimber Ltd (1995).

Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries Guidance Document

3. THE APPROACH

Introduction

- 3.1** The earliest conservation areas in Huntingdonshire were designated thirty years ago (in fact prior to local government reorganisation in 1974). The majority was designated between 1974 and 1980, with another set being added in the 1990's. The time is now right for boundary review.
- 3.2** The general approach to be applied when reviewing conservation area boundaries in Huntingdonshire is explained here. This includes the rationale, based on the statutory and regulatory framework set by central government, and includes good practice as promoted by English Heritage.
- 3.3** There are a number of levels at which a boundary review may be undertaken. This ranges from technical processes, such as scaling on maps, to more substantial issues involving historic and architectural interpretation. A hierarchy of the changes required has been identified, which is as follows: -
- (i) Where the boundaries to conservation areas have not been precisely drawn on the definitive maps (for example where the thickness of the line prevents unambiguous interpretation).
 - (ii) Recent changes that render current boundaries nonsensical. For example, where boundaries run through a building or divide a curtilage.
 - (iii) Effects of a too tightly drawn boundary. This may result in small groups of building or other features being excluded from the heart of the conservation area.
 - (iv) Major elements of historic or architectural importance left out of an area
 - (v) The criteria adopted in this guidance document (cf 3.6 below) are designed to address each of these levels.
- 3.4** How the boundaries for conservation areas in Huntingdonshire were first determined have not been recorded. The majority, however, are drawn to include listed buildings and rigorously exclude modern development. The result, in many cases, is a very tightly drawn and often convoluted boundary that fails to do justice to their special historical as well as architectural interest.
- 3.5** English Heritage recognises that many earlier conservation areas had their boundaries drawn too tightly and that these might need to be reconsidered. It also recognises that the immediate setting of the area may be included into the conservation area.

Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries Guidance Document

- 3.6** The criteria adopted here acknowledge that conservation areas are about a sense of “place” and work best when the dominant historic settlement pattern is used as the basis of designation. There are seven criteria as follows:-

- 1. The integrity of the topographical framework*
- 2. The identification of key settlement edges*
- 3. The preservation of natural elements at the boundaries*
- 4. The broader relationship of the built environment to the landscape or open countryside*
- 5. The integrity of significant archaeological sites*
- 6. Opportunities for economic regeneration*
- 7. Opportunities for character enhancement*

- 3.7** There will always be an element of subjectivity and personal judgement in making decisions about where boundaries should be set. These criteria will not make the process wholly objective, but they will guide the decision making process in a systematic way.

The Rationale for Applying the Criteria

- 3.8** The first conservation areas to be designated were the historic cores of much larger urban areas, such as in Huntingdonshire’s market towns, where the historic core has been outgrown by later development. However, particularly in rural areas where later development has taken place within the historic boundaries the whole settlement may be the appropriate unit for designation.
- 3.9** This issue is of particular importance in a predominantly rural district such as Huntingdonshire, where most conservation areas are in village settings. Consequently, historical research has to be undertaken to establish the underlying nature of designated settlements to aid the determination of any boundary revisions. **Criteria 1 & 2 apply establishing the integrity of the topographical framework and identifying key settlement edges.**
- 3.10** Furthermore, the landscapes within which rural conservation areas are set may be an important aspect of the built environment. It is worth bearing in mind that landscapes, and in particular designed landscapes, may be designated as Conservation Areas in their own right.
- 3.11** This approach is strengthened by paragraph 4.6 of PPG 15, which states that “designation may well, however, be suitable for historic parks or gardens and other areas of historic landscape containing structures that contribute to their special interest and that fall within the categories subject to conservation area control.” It is clear that conservation areas are about preserving or enhancing the special character of “place” in the broader context. **Criteria 3 & 4 apply, preserving the natural elements at the boundaries and establishing the broader relationship of the built environment to the landscape or open countryside.**

Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries Guidance Document

- 3.12** PPG 15: 4.17 recognises that not every element of a conservation area will make a positive contribution to the area and that some indeed may be negative. The expectation is that the emphasis in the use of planning powers in conservation areas will need to be on the controlled and positive management of change (Article 4.16). **Criteria 6 & 7 apply, identifying opportunities for economic regeneration and character enhancement.**
- 3.13** Ancient monuments may be obvious landmarks within, or near a conservation area. However, not all the elements that are of historical significance are immediately visible. For example, the archaeology of the area will, by its nature, normally be hidden. The morphology of any particular settlement may only make sense when the archaeology is taken into account. **Criterion 5 applies, establishing the integrity of archaeological sites.**

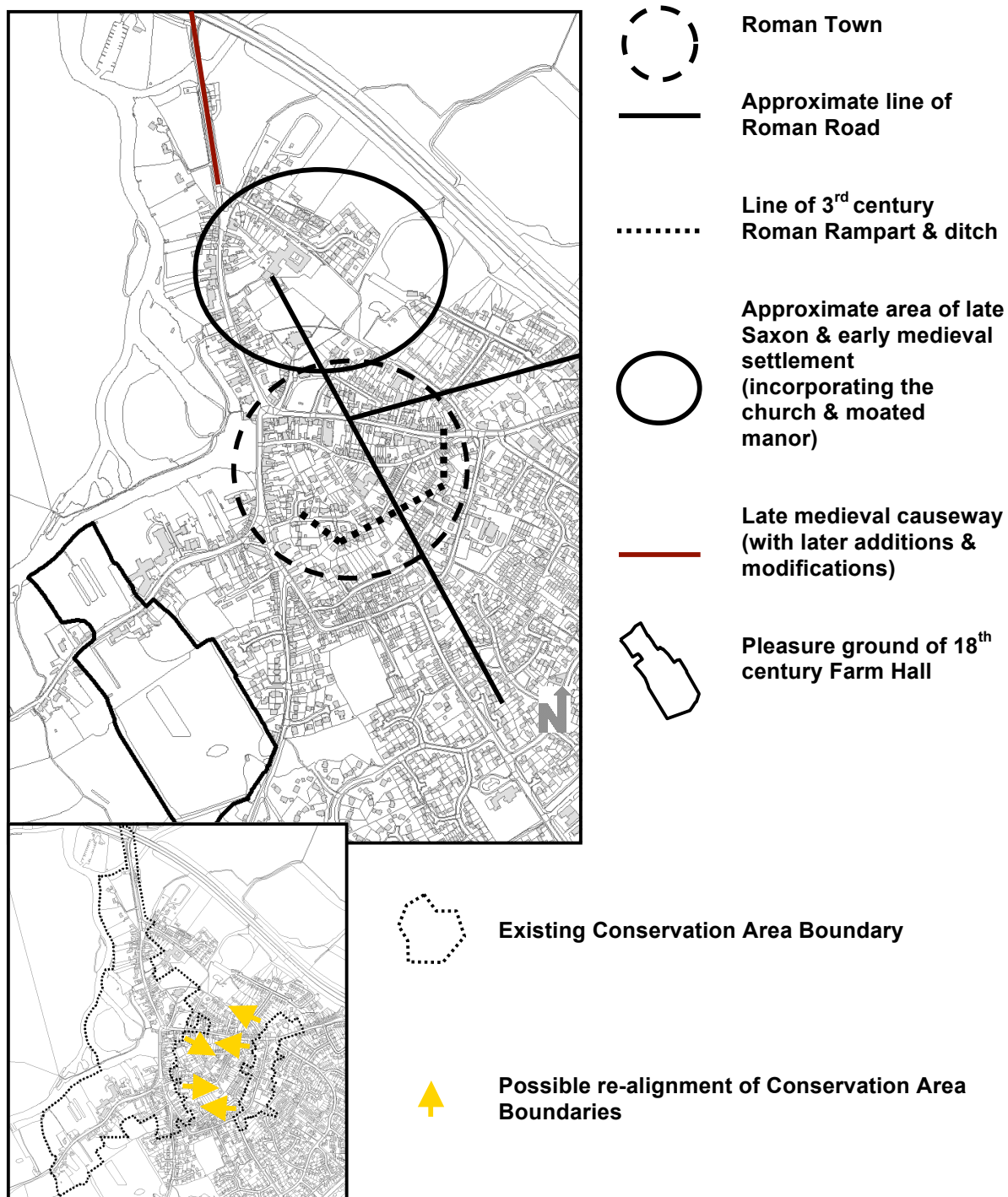
Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries Guidance Document

4. ANNEX: CRITERIA BASED CASE STUDIES

- 4.1** There are seven criteria to be applied to a settlement where an existing conservation area is under review. In the following pages there are a series of local case studies that illustrate each criterion in turn, as it might be applied to a particular settlement. In practice all of the criteria would need to be applied to each settlement reviewed. Only then could a decision be made on where exactly the boundary should be.

GODMANCHESTER

A Case Study on the Integrity of the Topographical Framework



CRITERION ONE: The Integrity Of The Topographical Framework.²

Explanation

The topographical framework of an area is intimately related to its historic development. The special interest of an area will frequently relate to one or more historic stages in its development.

A Conservation Area boundary should ensure the integrity of the historic elements that have formed the modern topography of the area. For example, it should protect significant road networks, ancient curtilage boundaries, and the relationship of buildings to each other and to open spaces.

There is a need for historical research when determining the significance of topographical features, although observation is important it is unlikely to be enough on its own.

CASESTUDY

Godmanchester

Godmanchester is a settlement with a long history going back until at least Roman times. Earning Street, Cambridge Street and Causeway approximately bound the core of the Roman town. Within this area a town fortification was built in the late 3rd century. However, the town fell out of use in the Saxon period to be replaced by an Early Saxon settlement to the east roughly in the area of the Cambridge road with a cemetery in Cow Lane.

There is no evidence of a Middle Saxon settlement at Godmanchester, but by late Saxon times the settlement seems to have moved to the north of the original Roman town to the area around the medieval Church and manor house. The late and post medieval borough recolonised the site of the Roman town to the south.

At Godmanchester the road structure closely reflects this history. For example, even though Ermine Street (the original Roman road from the southwest) was deflected from its original course through the Roman town in later ages, its old course is still discernible in the Stiles. The accompanying map demonstrates the historic road network including the medieval causeway (now the Avenue) with its 17th and 18th century improvements.

One of the most enduring features in a settlement is the curtilage boundaries. These can be very ancient, in some places reflecting prehistoric field boundaries. In Godmanchester, however, most curtilages are medieval or later. There are, for example, a number of fine 17th and 18th century houses with large curtilages. Farm Hall, in West Street, is a particularly good example with an elaborate planned garden, which should be maintained as a single unit for conservation purposes.

In determining the placing of conservation area's boundary topographical features, such as those mentioned above for Godmanchester, will

² PPG 15: 4. & 4.4

ABBOTSLEY

A Case Study in the Identification of Key Settlement Edges

Indicative extension for possible inclusion in the Conservation Area



Manor Farm and parkland, the southern most edge of the settlement.



Lane behind the High Green looking out towards the parkland attached to Manor Farm, the western edge of the settlement.



The High Green, Abbotsley. Key settlement edge houses that frame the village green. Even though they are not historic buildings, they are appropriate to the site.

Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries Guidance Document

CRITERION TWO: The Identification Of Key Settlement Edges.

Explanation

The setting of the boundary should pay due regard to the character of the buildings on either side of it, and any spatial qualities or views of importance at the boundary. In practice boundaries should be, wherever possible, visually self-evident.

Key settlement edges (in terms of their architectural or historic interest) may vary with time and such changes should be taken into consideration³. Sometimes boundaries will contract because of irreversible development changes. At other times settlement edges may expand.

There may be instances, for example, when existing or newer settlement outside current boundaries, should be considered for inclusion. Factors that should be taken into consideration are (a) the use of traditional building materials; (b) the spatial relationships between groups of buildings; (c) Instances of relevant economic activity or, rarely, the extension of traditional patronage.

CASESTUDY

Abbotsley

Abbotsley is a linear village built around a loop in the B1046 St. Neots/Gt. Gransden road on an elevated site with open farmland sweeping up to the village closes (small fields typically set out on the boundary between the village tenements and farmlands).

Of special note is the relationship between the church, the High Green with its associated houses; the structure given by the village farms, and in particular Manor Farm with its "parkland". There is much 20th century infill of varying quality. Most of the listed houses are of 17th or 18th century origins. It is typical of many Huntingdonshire villages and the settlement, as a whole, is special.

The area of the village west of the church is of particular interest. Here, a fair sized triangular green the "High Green" exists on a site that falls away dramatically from the ridge occupied by the church. This is a key element in the village, which is defined by the houses built around its perimeter

Beyond these houses on the south and west is the parkland belonging to Manor Farm, which marks the extent of the designed space before the open fields on this side of the village. Therefore, the houses between the green and the park are of particular importance in identifying the settlement edge.

Even though the houses in question are of no great architectural merit in themselves (in fact being mid-twentieth century council stock) their position marks a key settlement edge where there is a visually self-evident boundary.

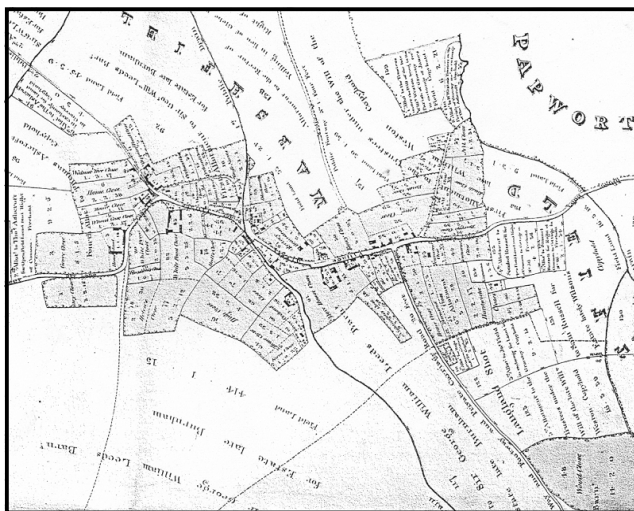
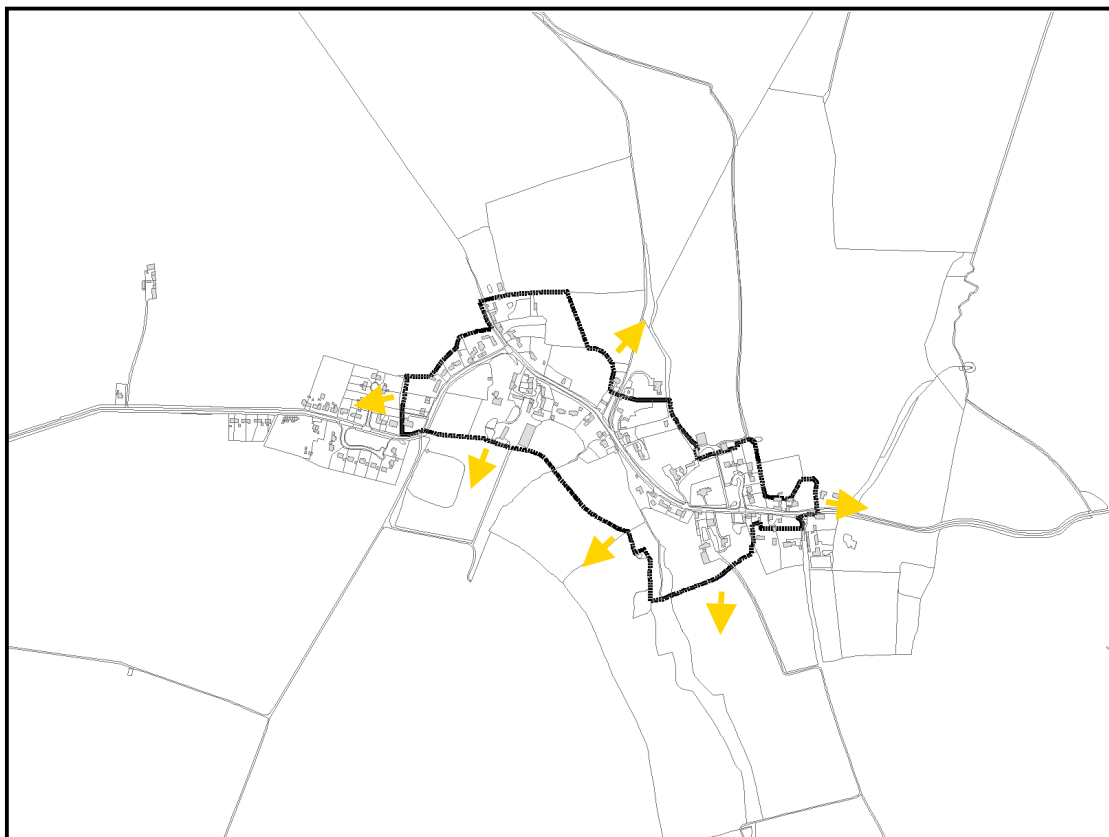
³ PPG 15:4.3

Review Of Conservation Area Boundaries Guidance Document

YELLING

A Case Study in the Preservation of Natural Elements at the boundaries of a Conservation Area

Indicative extension for possible inclusion in the Conservation Area



The village “closes” surveyed at the time of enclosure (left) are still largely discernable in the present day map (above).



Conservation Area Boundary



Possible movement of the boundary indicated by the application of the criteria

Boundaries Guidance Document

CRITERION THREE: The Preservation Of Natural Elements At The Boundaries.

Explanation

The character of conservation areas may be influenced by the presence of natural elements such as green (open) spaces, hedgerows and trees just within, or beyond its boundaries. These features may impact upon important vistas both out of, and into the conservation area, particularly along the lines of its formal approaches.

The boundary line should also protect such features as frontages worthy of protection and water/flood meadows that provide a setting for the area.

CASESTUDY

Yelling

Yelling is a linear settlement running broadly east – west across the valley of a north flowing stream. Set within rolling countryside mainly given over to arable in large open fields. It contains a medieval church at the eastern end of the village with historic houses throughout, some of them listed. 20th century infill housing is present within the ancient curtilages of the village.

The approaches to the village are characterised by hedged lanes. 18th/19th century closes and stockings that form a characteristic envelope for the settlement that runs along the main street encompass the entire settlement (although those at the west end have been built upon). There are a number of original farms along the Village Street that give it its special structure.

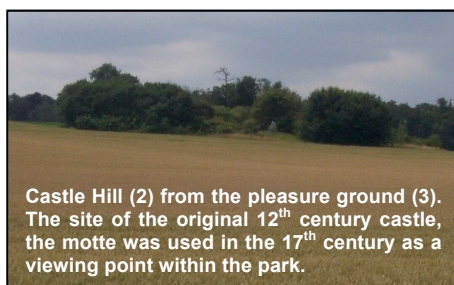
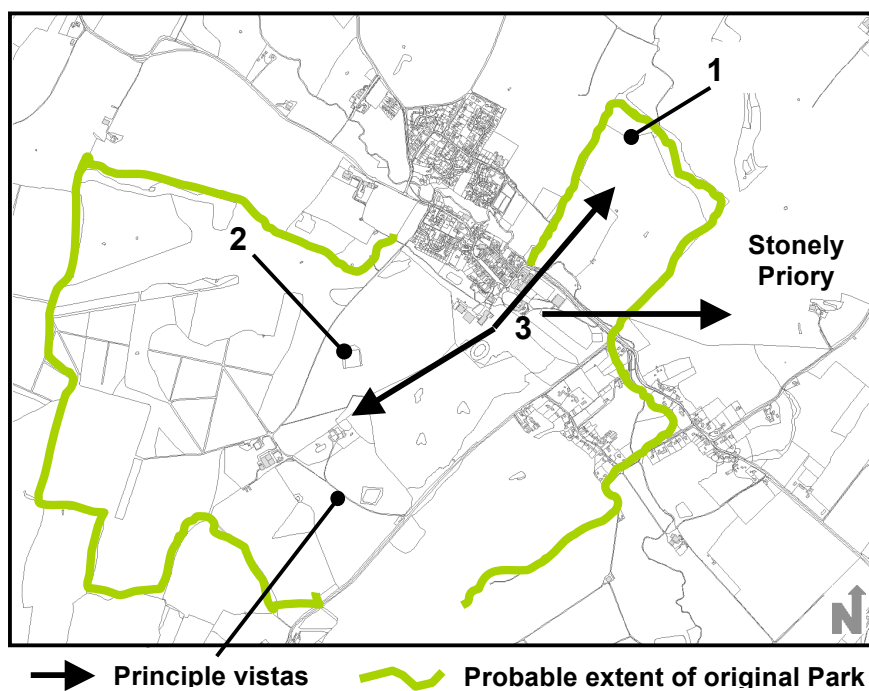
Yelling is typical of a number of Huntingdonshire rural settlements where the farms were dispersed along the lanes passing through the parish, usually grouped towards the church. Small closes, or fields, were created between the farmhouses and their outbuildings and the open farmland, an aspect of the agricultural economy of the time. This was originally a dispersed settlement pattern, which took on the form of a village by the creation of an envelope of closes and later infill between the farms.

At Yelling the closes that we see today were first recorded on the inclosure map of 1819, although most are probably older. The trees and hedges that mark the boundaries of these closes create a strong, natural visual edge to the settlement whether viewed from within the village looking out, or from without looking in.

Seen from the air, the settlement form is very clear. Even where the closes have been built over, the hedges and shelterbelts of trees maintain the clear distinction between what belongs to the village and what belongs to the open farmland beyond. In these circumstances it may be appropriate to consider having a conservation area that reflects this pattern.

KIMBOLTON

A Case Study of the Broader relationship between the Built Environment and the Landscape



At its formation Kimbolton was a planned Medieval Market town. The present conservation area includes this and the 18th century castle with part of its pleasure grounds. The application of this criteria suggests that at least some of the park might be included, but more information would be needed to set the exact limits.

CRITERION FOUR: The Broader Relationship Of The Built Environment To The Landscape Or Open Countryside.

Explanation

Elements of the historic landscape will often have importance to the special character and appearance of the conservation area, and the preservation or enhancement of its special architectural or historic interest⁴.

This could encompass a wide variety of possibilities, including elements of a designed landscape associated with the area; significant landmarks; vistas and panoramas.

CASESTUDY

Kimbolton

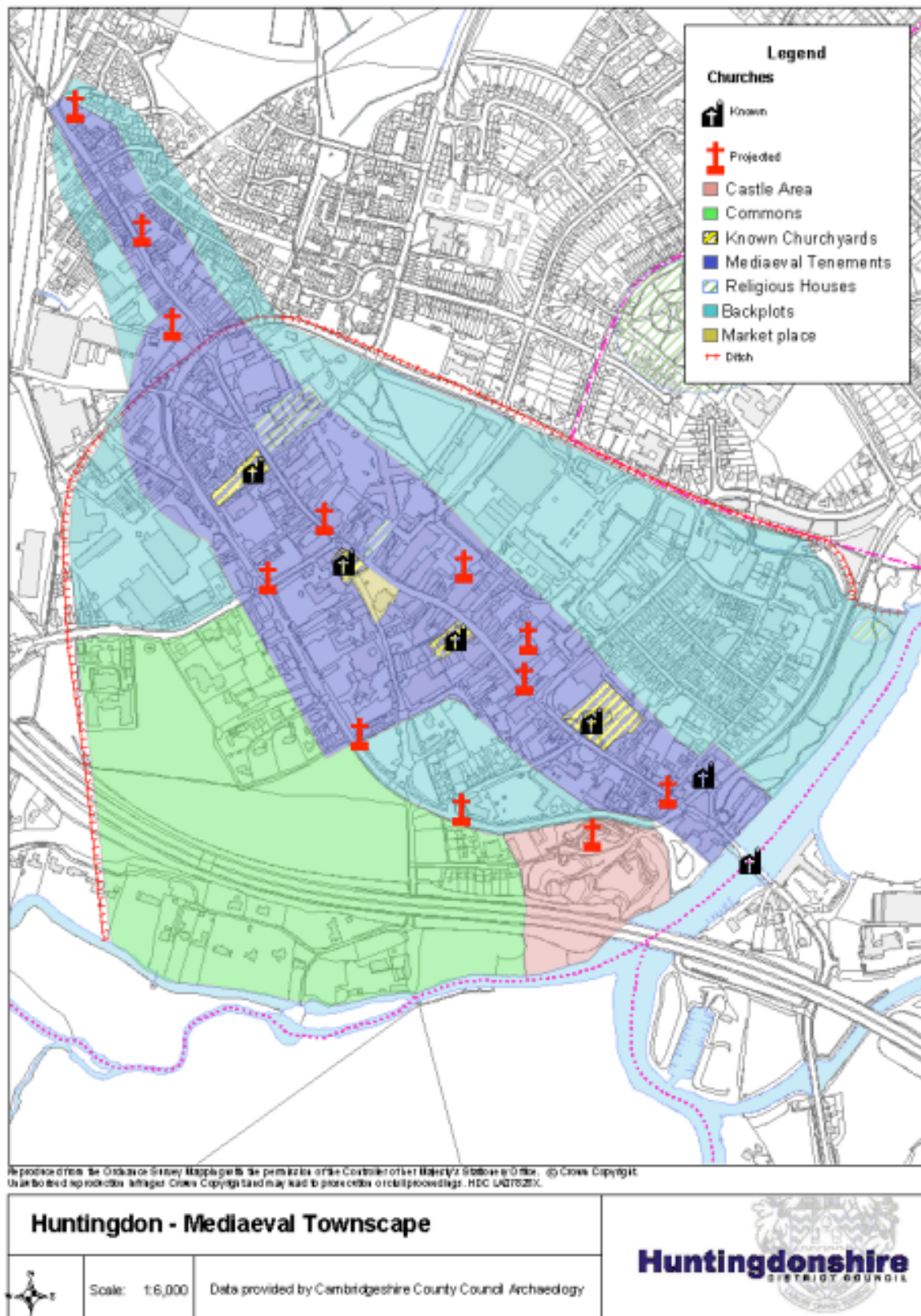
Kimbolton is the classic medieval planned market town set out in the late 12th century (its first charter granted in 1200). At one end of a broad High Street (once the site of the market and an annual fair) lies Kimbolton Castle. A previous late 13th century medieval castle had become a large country house by the 18th century. It is set within parkland, which was much enlarged, also in the 18th century. The whole settlement lies within a planned landscape with related features in the open countryside.

Kimbolton Castle has a pleasure ground to the south and east (with a particularly impressive avenue of Wellingtonia that extends beyond the Castle curtilage), with further garden features along Duchess walk that leads northwest to the old kitchen garden. Beyond the pleasure ground is the Park that fans out to the south and west to half encircle the whole settlement. There are significant views from the castle into the park, particularly to the Castle Hill (ancient monument), Black Quarter Lawn (emparked by 1763) and a house called The Lodge (a principal focal point). Although the permanent pasture of the Park has been ploughed up, this is not an irreversible change.

The River Kym flows from the northwest to the south east through the parish, and forms the boundary to the medieval planned market town on this side. Beyond it there are the Town Closes, now partly built upon. There is a good 19th century cemetery on one and the closes to the south east of this remain open. Beyond these there is an extension to the Park that is now under arable. However, the view from the Castle to Warren House over this redundant parkland is significant, as is the view across fields to Stonely Priory in the east.

The relationship between Kimbolton Castle and the medieval town on the one side, and the parkland, town closes and open countryside on the other is complicated. However, much of what makes Kimbolton special depends on the preservation of the balance between these key elements

⁴ PPG 15: 4.6



CRITERION FIVE: The Integrity Of Significant Archaeological Sites.

Explanation

Boundaries should respect archaeological sites that have historical significance for the area.

Also, where there is an ancient monument of significance for the conservation area provision should be made to protect that relationship (for example, where the monument currently lies outside the conservation area).⁵

By their nature archaeologically significant sites are usually those that have not yet been fully excavated and should be protected by PPG 16. However, they are also important for conservation areas as sources of information that help us to consolidate our knowledge of a settlement's morphology.

CASESTUDY

Huntingdon

Huntingdon as the old county town of Huntingdonshire has a special character related to its function. The County Jail, Hospital and the barracks have contributed to this and their remains are significant in the historical context. However, there are even older remains, rarely visible on the surface that have considerable archaeological significance and tell the story of Huntingdon past.

The morphology of Huntingdon is that of a medieval settlement that remained largely unchanged until the 20th century. The earliest plan of the town is that of John Speed published in 1610. A comparison of this with the plan by Jefferys' in 1768 and the O.S. 25" plan of 1900 plainly show that the town covered much the same ground area throughout that period. This is reinforced by the known (or projected) archaeological elements of the medieval townscape.

This suggests, for example, that Mill Common was always within the settlement, and not an external feature. It also shows how the late Saxon settlement was extended along Ermine Street beyond the Town Ditch during the course of the middle Ages (between the High Street and the present day railway bridge).

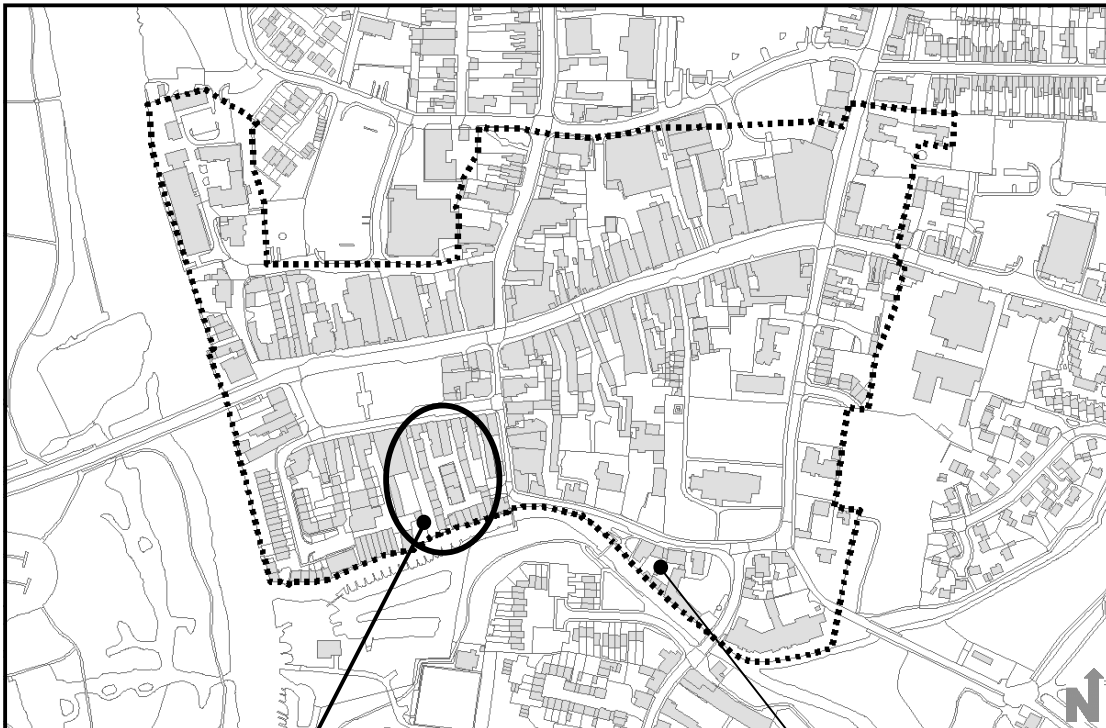
Although the locations of many of the medieval churches are speculative (largely relying on the finding of human remains) the churches themselves are known to have existed through historical documents and their distribution reinforces the size of the medieval town.

The insertion of the ring road has done much to disrupt the morphology of Huntingdon's historic core. The archaeological evidence helps to reinforce the integrity of the town's original plan and suggests the need for a re-appraisal of how development within the historic core might be managed in the future.

⁵ Also refer to PPG 16.

ST NEOTS

A Case Study in the Opportunities for Economic Development in a Conservation Area



Example of listed and locally important historic buildings conservation supported by an English Heritage grant



Example of new build as a result of a Conservation Area Partnership initiative

This example is taken from an existing conservation area. However, it may be that an area currently outside a conservation area, but with potential for managed change, could be included in order to qualify it for the benefits that inclusion would provide.

CRITERION SIX: Opportunities For Economic Regeneration.

Explanation

English Heritage also encourages the development of economic regeneration within conservation areas. Opportunities may arise where a boundary change might enable or enhance this kind of activity.

Besides specific grants for historic features within conservation areas, other grant aid may also be forth coming from other sources for the regeneration of negative or neutral sites with contemporary development to complement historic material.

CASESTUDY

St. Neots

St. Neots was carved out of the parish of Eynesbury with the transfer of manorial lands to the Benedictine house founded at the river crossing here about the 12th century. Soon afterwards the monastery established a market that led directly to the development of the town.

St. Neots is an example of recent regeneration work being carried out to enhance the conservation of heritage sites within the town. This was promoted through the formation of a Conservation Area Partnership (CAP) between English Heritage, Huntingdonshire District Council, property owners and other stakeholders.

The closure of Paine's brewery, right in the centre of St. Neots, in 198- put at risk some high quality historic buildings situated directly onto the Market Square. The creation of the CAP enabled historic buildings grant to flow not only to these buildings but also to others elsewhere in the conservation area.

A direct result of this regeneration work has been some new development, in keeping with the conservation area, on negative or neutral sites in the town.

St. Neots town centre was an existing conservation area. But it is not difficult to see that the extension of a conservation area may also allow additional funding to be made available. Depending on circumstances, this may apply to both the historic elements of an extended area and also the negative and neutral elements that may have hindered inclusion in the past.

There are a number of such schemes that have been successful in other districts.

ST IVES

A Case Study in Opportunities for Enhancement



An illustrative plan of how the inclusion of a negative site within a conservation area may lead to positive enhancement. The site as it previously appeared (above), and an artists impression of the replacement housing (below).



Elevation from Ramsey Road of proposed development

This site, despite being originally a 'negative' one, has benefited from being included in a conservation area and illustrates well the advantages of avoiding creating 'islands' of excluded sites.

CRITERION SEVEN: Opportunities For Character Enhancement.

Explanation

The existence of conservation areas is also an opportunity for change where there are negative or neutral elements existing which detract from the character of the area. By their nature, these elements will form a comparatively small proportion of the total extent of the conservation area.

There may be occasions when the placing of the boundary will influence the way that beneficially managed change may operate with respect to such elements (for example where negative or neutral elements have previously been left as “outliers” within the broad conservation “envelope”).⁶

Unlisted buildings may also make a positive contribution⁷ and should be assessed according to English Heritage’s guidelines.

CASESTUDY

St. Ives

St. Ives is a delightful market town built upon the banks of the Great Ouse at a crossing point of the River. The growth of a market here in the middle ages was largely the result of the Benedictine priory that was re-established here in 1008 after the relocation of the shrine of St. Ivo from Cornwall about 1000AD.

The existing conservation area encompasses most of the medieval core of the town (although not many buildings from the earlier time exist, apart from the 15th century bridge). It also includes Hemingford Meadow on the other side of the river.

A prominent site on the corner of Ramsey Road and The Waits (an extension of the Broadway) has in the recent past been a brown field site with a negative impact on its locality. Its inclusion within the conservation area has enabled the local planning authority to influence redevelopment so as to ensure the enhancement of this part of the town.

There are a number of examples from other places within the district where negative or neutral sites have been left out of the conservation area boundary. Sometimes these form enclaves within conservation areas, and as such are beyond the beneficial management of change that inclusion would afford.

⁶ PPG 15: 4.17, and Management of Conservation Areas, Section 3.1 xii & xiii.

⁷ PPG 15: 4.4

The Hemingfords Conservation Area **Boundary Review**

2008



The Hemingfords

The Hemingfords Conservation Area Boundary Review

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The Hemingfords Conservation Area Boundary Review

Review of the Boundaries of The Hemingfords Conservation Area (draft Proposals March 2007)

Introduction:

This report outlines the draft proposals for the drawing of new boundaries for The Hemingfords Conservation Area following an appraisal of the existing boundaries. This Conservation Area includes the neighbouring settlements of Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey.

The policy basis of the appraisal is contained in the Huntingdonshire Conservation Area Boundary Review Guidance Document adopted by the Council in January 2003. The statutory basis for review is Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Area) Act 1990. This states that: -

“It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas: and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.”

Government policy on how that duty should be exercised is stated in Policy Planning Guidance 15 (PPG 15) issued jointly by the Department for the Environment and the Department of National Heritage in September 1994. Policies for Conservation Areas are contained in part one, section 4.

PPG 15 paragraph 4.4 refers local planning authorities for more detailed advice to English Heritage's guidance note “Conservation Area Practice” (1993, revised 1995) and the seven criteria for review reproduced in the Annex of this report are based on this advice. English Heritage published further guidance on the management of Conservation Areas and Conservation Area appraisals in February 2006, which has also informed the process.

The conduct of the review followed the methodology highlighted in the guidance document mentioned above. This comprised

of a ranging survey looking at the historical and cartographical evidence and a site survey of the villages themselves. A summary of the results of these two surveys is attached as an annex to this report. Reference to this annex will help to explain the proposed boundary changes.

This review is specifically about the setting of revised boundaries. An analysis of the character of the proposed Conservation Areas for The Hemingfords has been carried out as a companion exercise and the result is published in (draft) The Hemingfords Conservation Area Character Assessment, which is available separately from Huntingdonshire District Council. More detailed information concerning the architectural and historic significance of the areas proposed for inclusion in the revised Conservation Area can be found in this document.

The Detailed Proposals (see Annex 1.1 1.4):

The original Hemingfords Conservation Area, designated on the 14th October 1974, is for the most part satisfactory. It recognises both the significance of the built environment and the contribution of the landscape setting to the specialness of the settlement. It is one of three Conservation Areas, along with St Ives and Houghton-cum-Wyton, whose boundaries interlock to embrace this stretch of the Ouse Valley.

The boundary, however, did not fully take into account the historic development of the settlement and consequently left out some key sites and aspects. Revisions are based on the historic significance of specific areas to the development of the settlements and the preservation of the setting of the settlements. Thus any extension of the boundary should not be judged solely on the architectural quality of buildings within the proposed additional areas. Inevitably this sometimes means the inclusion of sites that currently have a negative or neutral impact on the villages. This is in accordance with English Heritage recommendations that a

The Hemingfords Conservation Area Boundary Review

Conservation Area boundary is a mechanism for enabling better and sustainable development and regeneration opportunities (see Annex 2.1- 2.7).

A further principle that has been adopted is that any newly defined boundary should be good for at least thirty years for planning future development. The full scope of the proposed boundary changes is well illustrated on the accompanying aerial photograph (page 6).

It is proposed that the extent of the original Conservation Area is retained, but that a number of extensions are created. The proposal is for extension at four points, together with the redrawing of the agreed boundary lines to better cartographical standards. The proposed changes are as follows (the paragraph identification letters refer to the areas on the accompanying map - page 5): -

- A.** This is the extent of the original Conservation Area. A small addition is proposed to the southern boundary to the west of Rideaway in order to give the Conservation Area a more clearly demarcated edge by using an existing trackway as the new boundary **[Aa]**.
- B.** The inclusion of the western part of Common Lane and California Wood. The line of the present boundary does sit naturally with reference to the buildings on either side of it. Although the quality of the houses along this stretch of Common Lane is varied, many are interesting examples of 20th century detached village houses. The whole forms a visually pleasing extension of the village to the west and has reached a natural limit at the margin of the Godmanchester East Common.
- C.** Godmanchester East Common is a significant piece of open land adjacent to Hemingford Abbots. It is the logical termination to an important village street, Common Lane. It is in fact within Godmanchester parish, but detached from the rest of the common land in that parish. East Common contains significant earthworks including ridge and furrow as well as the remains of the dismantled Great

Northern & Great Eastern Railway. Economically it was an important element in the agrarian economy of the district and it is still administrated by Commoners, an example of a very traditional patronage. It is also host to a major public right of way, the Ouse Valley Way.

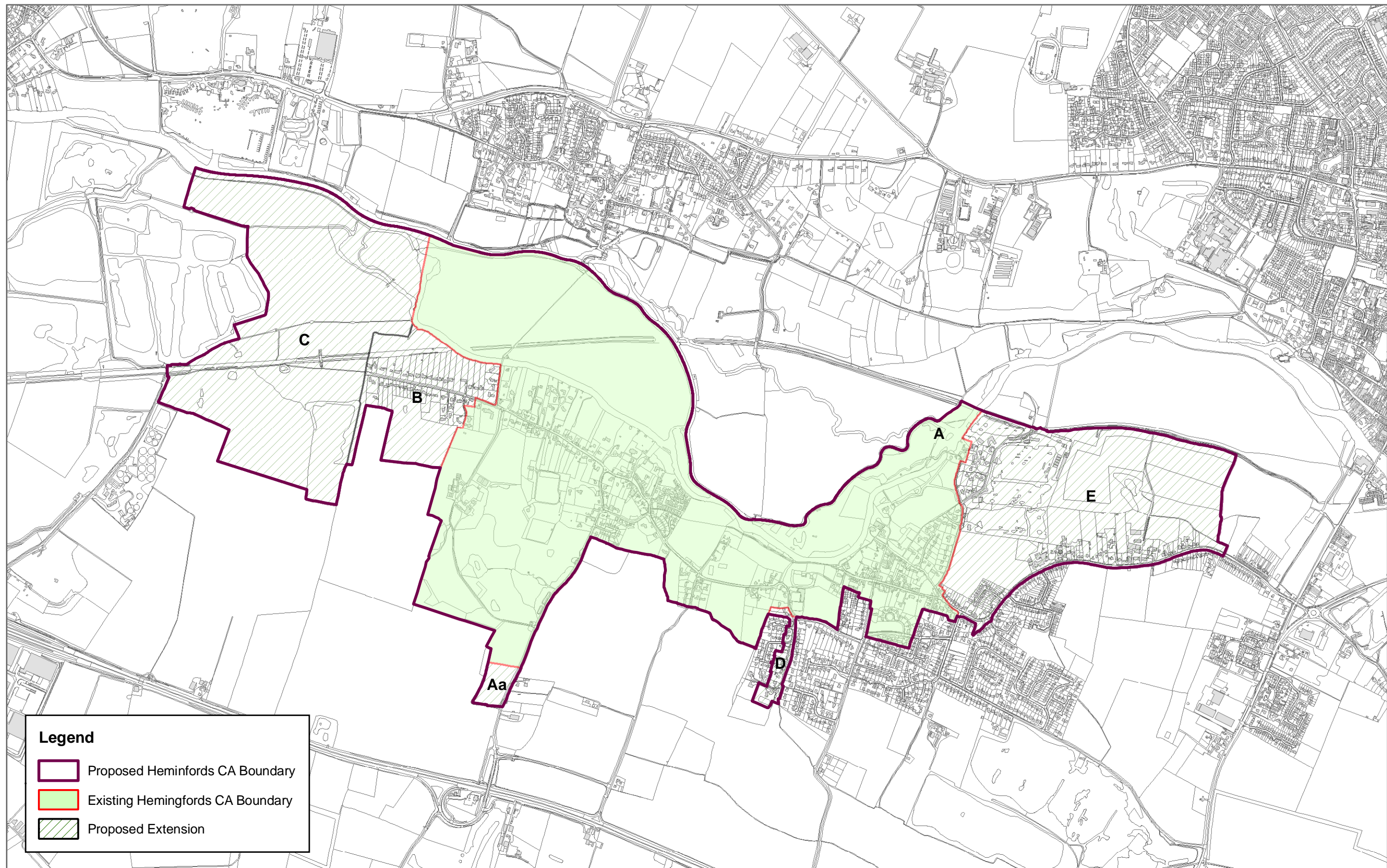
- D.** The area of Thorpe on the Hemingford Grey side of the boundary between the two parishes. This is thought to be an ancient area of settlement with an identity of its own. It is now largely built over but sufficient elements of its original form exist to justify inclusion of a part.
- E.** The eastern portal to the village of Hemingford Grey is not well served by the present line of the Conservation Area boundary. It is proposed that a tract of land north from the St. Ives/Hemingford Road to the bank south of Hemingford Meadow is included, with its western edge along Meadow Lane and its eastern boundary abutting the St Ives Conservation Area. This area was originally part of the Common Fields of the settlement and contains significant historic elements including the Edwardian village school, a relict windmill, and other agriculturally significant relicts. Within this locality there are drowned gravel workings, once an important local resource. The inclusion of this area would also close the gap between this Conservation Area and that of St Ives south of the River Great Ouse.

As the road from St Ives loops around into the village from the east there is a very mixed area of housing, some of which is not particularly good, whilst others are in keeping with the village at this point. Inclusion in the Conservation Area would help to manage any future development beneficially, and may encourage some better redevelopment in the future. This would be in line with guidance issued by English Heritage and views are sought on a proposal to include this area. This area also contains the site of a pond and pound.

The Hemingfords Conservation Area Boundary Review

The Conservation Area for Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey is favoured by inclusion of much of the historically significant landscape as well as its abundance of architecturally significant buildings within its present boundaries. The proposals set out above merely complete the established pattern and enhance the probability that any future development will respect the intrinsic nature of the Conservation Area. The aim is to preserve that relationship between open spaces and the built environment that are so essential to the specialness of the settlements here.

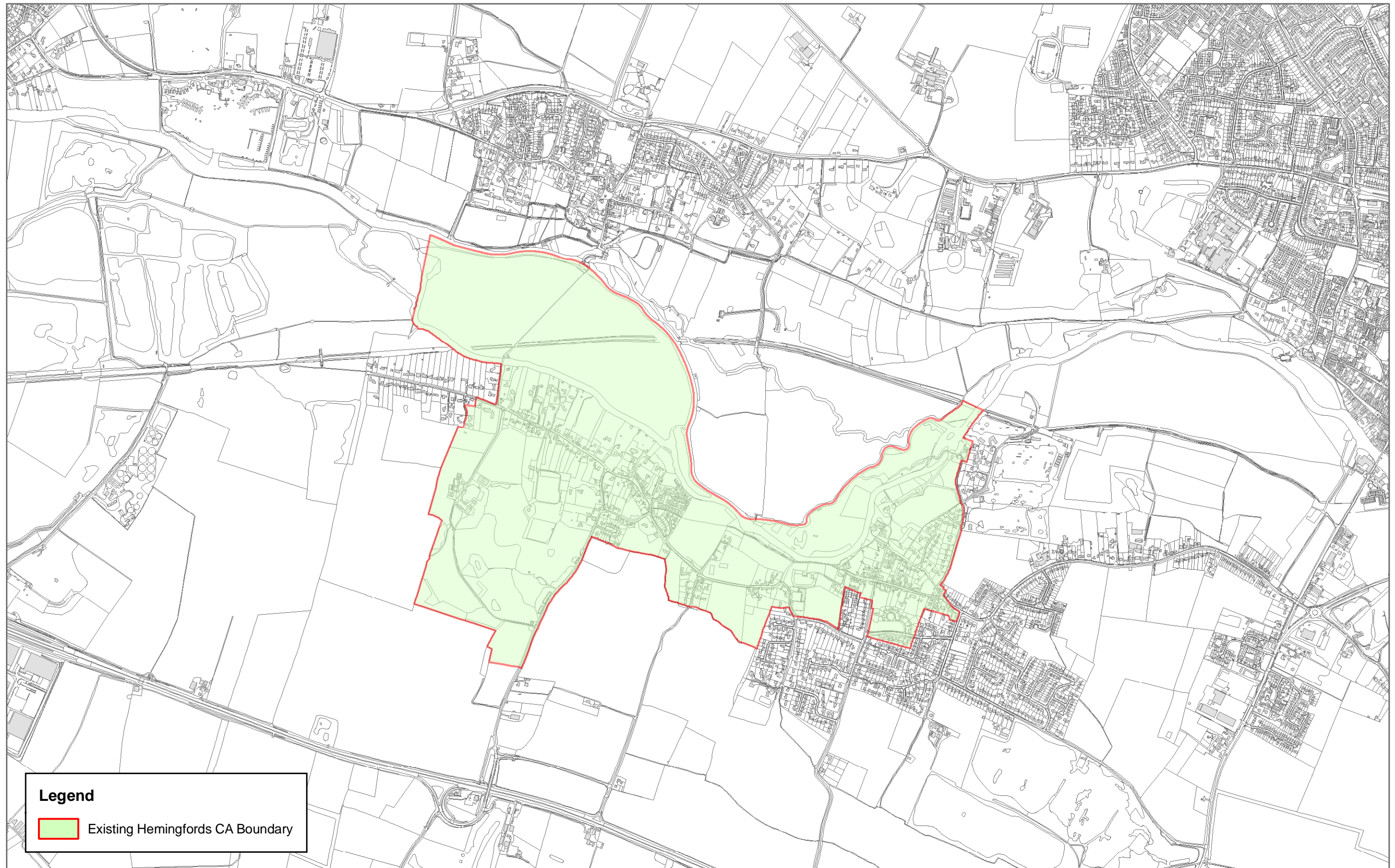
These proposals, together with the character assessment will be subject to public consultation prior to any decision to implement them.



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The Hemingfords Conservation Area Boundary Review

ANNEX: The Hemingfords Conservation Area Boundary Review

Summary of survey findings

1. Description of the Original Hemingford Conservation Area (map ref: TL 2871/2970)

1.1 Special Character of the Settlement

The Hemingfords (Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey) are two adjacent settlements that are situated on the south bank of the River Great Ouse. Their respective parishes run south from the river with their long axis orientated north/south. Their morphology is similar, consisting of an east to west village street with associated churches and mills. Each parish has plentiful meadowland, which is a feature of the settlement pattern.

1.2 General Character of the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area that covers both settlements includes the historic built core and the riverside meadows and principal monuments. Historically it is a comprehensive area that recognises the morphology of both settlements.

1.3 Key Features Outside the Conservation Area Boundary

There are few key features outside the current Conservation Area. However, the boundaries on both the eastern and western portals are uncharacteristically mean and lack rationale. Also, in the west where Hemingford Abbots' Common Lane issues onto the Godmanchester East Common, the relationship between the village and the open land needs re-establishing. In the east the relationship of the village school, the windmill and other elements of the village of Hemingford Grey needs re-appraisal.

1.4 Boundary Issues

The principal boundary issues are at the western boundary of Hemingford Abbots and the eastern boundary of Hemingford Grey respectively.

2. Issues to be Addressed by the Boundary Review (applying the seven criteria set out in the adopted guidance document, January 2003)

2.1. The integrity of the topographical framework (historically significant road networks and curtilage boundaries)

The majority of the historically significant roads are protected. Those which are less successfully protected are on the eastern flank of Hemingford Grey, in particular: the St Ives Road; Meadow Lane; and Marsh Lane. Common Lane in Hemingford Abbots is not fully protected, particularly where it enters Godmanchester East Common.

Ancient curtilage boundaries are mostly protected, although at Thorpe they are not included. There are also issues on the east flank of Hemingford Grey, particularly around the windmill on the St Ives Road.

The relationship of buildings to each other and to open spaces is well protected in this area, except with regard to Godmanchester East Common.

2.2. The identification of key settlement edges (the character of buildings on either side of the original boundary; spatial qualities or views of importance at the boundary)

The character of the buildings on either side of the boundary is not completely taken account of at the east and west portals of these settlements. At the western portal of Hemingford Abbots there is little difference between the development on either side of the current boundary. It would not be possible to discern where the boundary lies by observation alone. This needs to be addressed.

The spatial relationship between groups of buildings on either side of the boundary is not addressed at the western and eastern portals of the settlements. To the west the rhythm of the spatial relationships between buildings is interrupted by the present boundary. To the east the relationship spatially between the outlying mill and school buildings, the core of the settlement, and the open land is not respected by the boundary.

The Hemingfords Conservation Area Boundary Review

Equally, spatial qualities or views of importance at the boundary are not fully regarded in the areas mentioned above. Consideration needs to be given to the views into the village of Hemingford Grey in the east, and to the relationship between the elements of common land, meadow and the river in the area of Common Lane, Hemingford Abbots.

There is an area of traditional patronage at the western portal where the important common land economy is not respected. Although strictly speaking the common land here is part of the neighbouring parish of Godmanchester, it relates strongly with The Hemingfords spatially.

2.3. The preservation of natural elements at the boundaries

The present boundary recognises the importance of natural elements such as green (open) spaces currently outside the boundary, hedgerows and trees just within, or beyond the Conservation Area - with the exception of the Godmanchester East Common.

Important vistas both out of, and into the Conservation Area and significant features along the lines of its formal approaches are generally well protected, except in the east where the boundary is weak. The water meadows that provide a setting for the area are strongly protected.

2.4. The broader relationship of the built environment to the landscape or open countryside

This is one of the strengths of the existing boundary, excepting on the eastern flank where the sureness of touch was lost.

2.5. The integrity of significant archaeological sites.

Although the archaeology of the area was probably not greatly considered when the present boundary was drawn up, its comprehensiveness has likely embraced most of what is important. Exceptions are the features such as the course of the old railway line to the west and any relating to Thorpe.

2.6. Opportunities for economic regeneration

This is not really a major factor in this instance, although the eastern portal to the settlement would benefit from a more sympathetic style of building in any future redevelopment in this locality. Similarly, unsympathetic modern housing has degraded the southern edge of the settlement at Hemingford Grey.

2.7. Opportunities for character enhancement

Character enhancement would benefit the point where the St Ives Road enters the settlement.

3. Reference material

- HER (Cambridgeshire County Council)
- Register of historic parks & gardens
- Historic maps: OS 25" XXII. 3 & 4. Inclosure maps PM2/19 (1806); PM2/20 (1801)
- Architectural commentaries: (e.g. RCHME; Pevsner)
- Victoria County History of Huntingdonshire
- The Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment
- Jowett's Atlas of Railways in Great Britain
- Kirby, T. & Oosthuizen, S. (eds.) An Atlas of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire History, APU 2000
- Lewes's Topographical Dictionary, London, 1848
- The Review of Conservation Area Boundaries in Huntingdonshire- Guidance Document (January 2003)

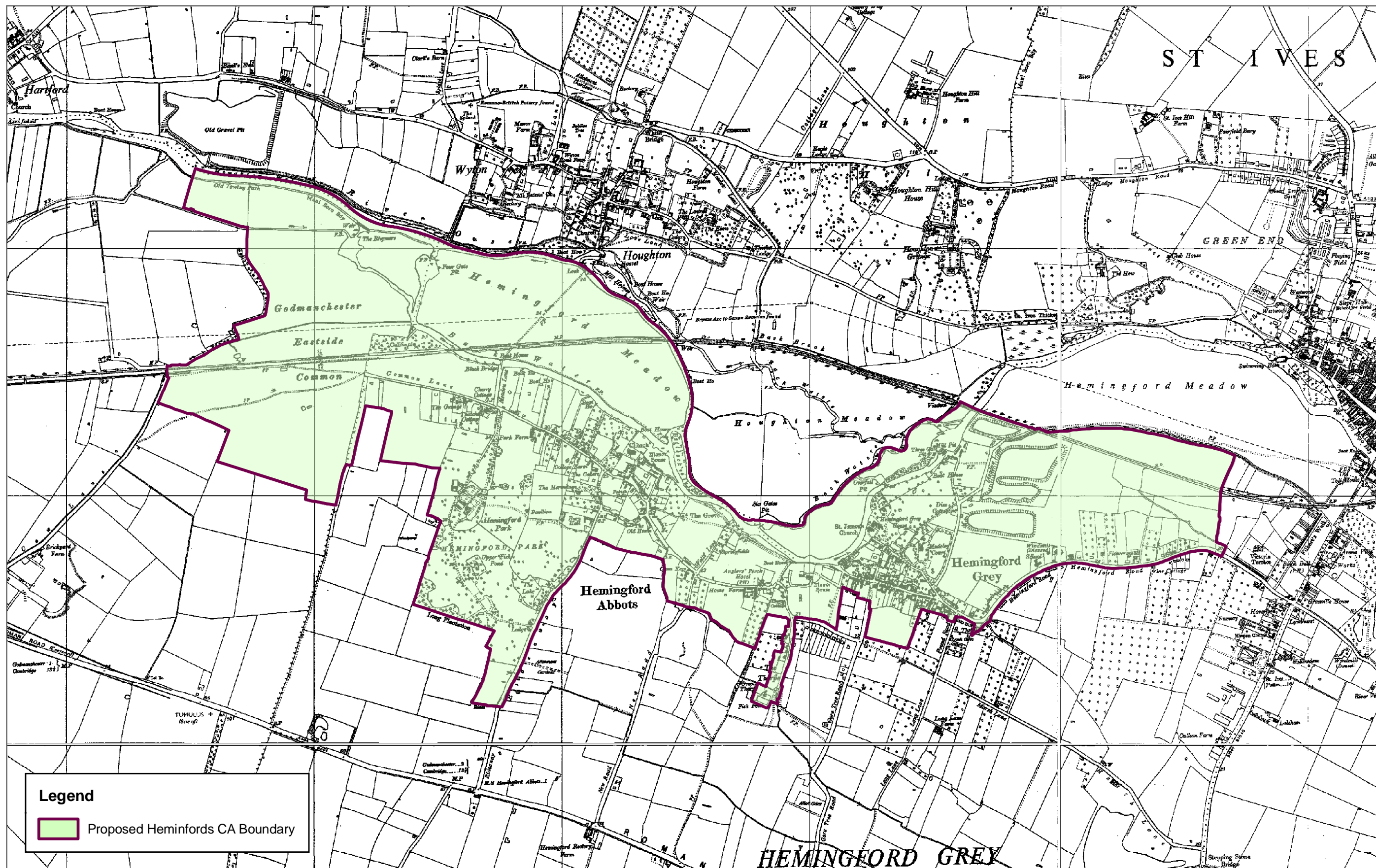


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Huntingdonshire
 district council

Map 4: Hemingfords 1880s Map



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The Hemingfords Conservation Area **Character Assessment**

2008



The Hemingfords

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Foreword

The Hemingfords Boundary Review and Character Assessment have been produced as part of the overall review of the The Hemingfords Conservation Area. The Character Assessment has been structured under separate headings to present each part of the review as clearly as possible.

The **Introduction** provides an overview of the geography and context for the historic development of The Hemingfords. The **Statement of Significance** outlines the main elements of the town's historic core and the areas proposed for inclusion in the revised Conservation Area.

The **Historical Development** section presents the stages of the villages' development and building history. It includes historic maps showing how the villages have expanded. The **Analysis of the Conservation Area** divides the villages into different local 'neighbourhoods' in order to draw out their distinctive characteristics. It then provides a character analysis, spatial analysis, building types study and a design code for each neighbourhood. The **Character Analysis** looks at the historic development of an area and how this is reflected in built form. The **Spatial Analysis** looks at how the buildings address the street and form important green or open spaces. The **Building Type Analysis** looks at how the different styles and types of building are distributed. This section refers to building type codes presented in **Annex A** which is located on page 26. The **Building Details and Materials Analysis** highlights typical or distinctive architectural details and materials within each neighbourhood. The **Design Code** then summarises the above information, showing how the pattern or 'grain' of development in each part of each village affects the appearance of its built form and, therefore, its essential character.

At the end of the document, the **Opportunities for Future Enhancement** section suggests where improvements to the built form or local environment might be made to benefit the overall character of the Conservation Area.

Annex A, as mentioned above, explains the different types of building found in the district and which of these are relevant to The Hemingfords. **Annex B** lists all the statutorily listed buildings and buildings of local interest in The Hemingfords. **Annex C** presents District Council policies and references used in the development of the document.

1.0 Introduction, Statement of Significance and Historical Development

Introduction

1.1 Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey are villages within the area of Huntingdonshire District Council located approximately 5 - 6 kilometres east of Huntingdon [map ref. TL 3070] (see Map 1). They are situated on the south bank of the River Great Ouse in what was the historic County of Huntingdonshire. The Civil Parish of Hemingford Abbots contains 979.7 hectares (2421 acres), and the population in 2001 was 583 (625). The Civil Parish of Hemingford Grey contains 708.6 hectares (1751 acres), and the population in 2001 was 2,530 and 2,400 in 1991.

Map 1. The geographical setting of The Hemingfords within Huntingdonshire

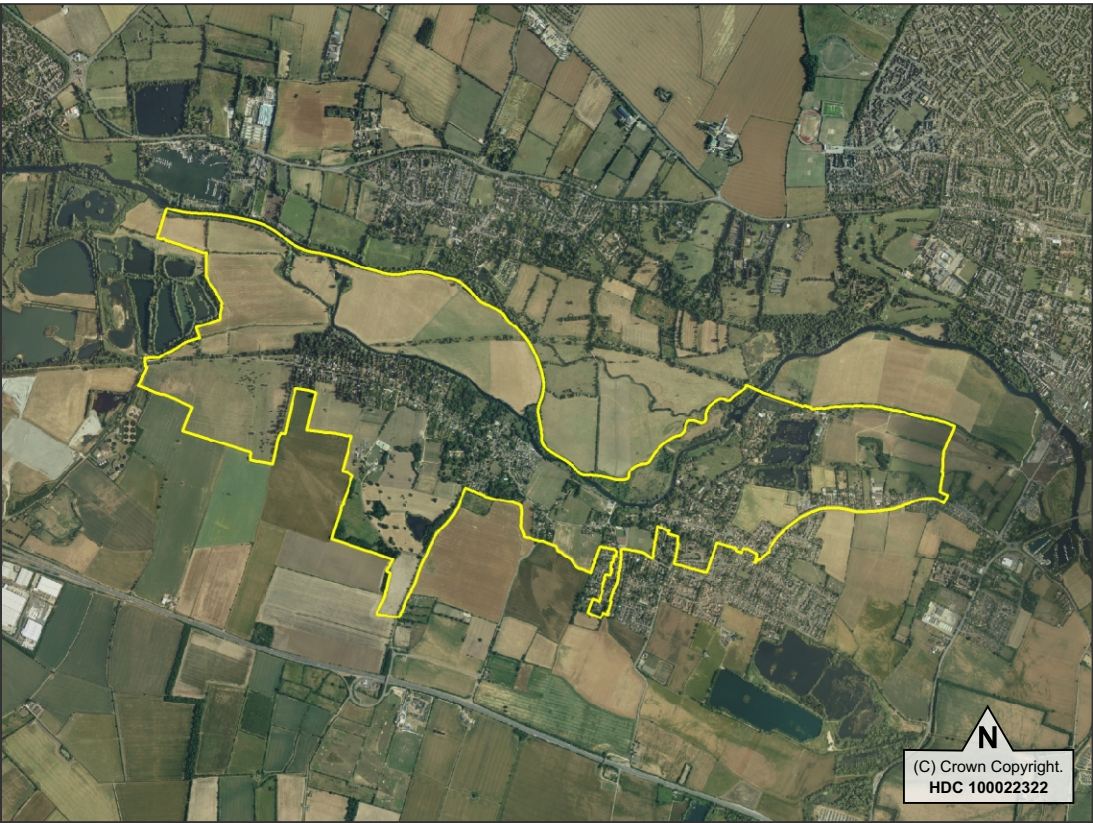


1.2 These two neighbouring villages are situated within the valley of the River Great Ouse where the flood plain is approximately 500 - 1000 metres wide and liable to heavy flooding. At this point gravel deposits are found on both sides of the river and these were probably a factor in attracting early settlement. Both settlements are between 5 - 10 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) with the land rising to approximately 40 metres AOD in the southern part of Hemingford Abbots parish. Hemingford Grey, on the other hand, is lower lying with the land rising to only 10 metres in the extreme southwestern corner (the highest point being 12 metres AOD).

- 1.3 The underlying geology is principally Oxford Clay overlain with extensive silt deposits in the floodplain of the Great Ouse. As mentioned above, the river has also deposited river gravels that provide well-drained areas for settlement. These gravels are rich in archaeological remains associated in particular with early human habitation.
- 1.4 The Hemingfords' Conservation Area is one of sixty Conservation Areas in Huntingdonshire. It is Huntingdonshire District Council's intention to produce new, or updated character assessments for all designated Conservation Areas as part of a rolling programme. The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon local planning authorities to formulate proposals for conserving and enhancing Conservation Areas. Following consultation and approval the Character Assessment for The Hemingfords will carry weight as a 'material consideration' in planning decisions.
- 1.5 Conservation Areas are designated for their “special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. This means that consideration is given to the evolution of the community as well as the physical environment within a Conservation Area. Street patterns, the architectural quality of the buildings, open spaces, trees and other tangible evidence relating to the social and economic development of a settlement are given due weight. In this way every aspect of the historic environment of present day Hemingfords has been taken into account.
- 1.6 Like other villages in Huntingdonshire, The Hemingfords' built environment developed slowly from the Middle Ages and new development during that period was normally contained within a traditional settlement pattern, even where the changes were socially and economically significant (for example, the enclosure of the open fields in the early 19th century). However, after about 1950 peripheral housing estates were developed (particularly in Hemingford Grey) that departed from this traditional development pattern. For this reason the character analysis for The Hemingfords draws on the settlement morphology prior to 1950.
- 1.7 Within the boundary of The Hemingfords Conservation Area certain parts may need improvement or be ripe for re-development. Being in the Conservation Area will help developers and planners to ensure that improvements will enhance the character of these villages along the lines laid down in this document.
- 1.8 Conservation Area designation also places some restrictions on minor development works that would, otherwise, be permitted without formal planning applications being made. Further restrictions may be introduced by the Local Planning Authority (or the Secretary of State) that effectively withdraw other permitted development rights in all or part of a Conservation Area in order to conserve the quality of the area.
- 1.9 Furthermore, all trees growing within the boundaries of a Conservation Area are protected and additionally permission must be sought prior to the demolition of most buildings.

Statement of Significance

- 1.10
- The villages of Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey lie close to the south bank of the River Great Ouse and are nucleated settlements with important meadowlands. They have had a joint Conservation Area since the 14th October 1974.
- 1.11
- The Hemingfords have one Scheduled Ancient Monument, namely Hemingford Grey Manor. There are 44 buildings on the National List in Hemingford Abbots, of which one (the Parish Church of St. Margaret) is grade 1 and two others are grade 2*; eight others buildings are of local interest. In Hemingford Grey there are 39 buildings on the National List of which two (the Parish Church of St. James and the 12th century Hemingford Grey Manor House) are Grade 1. A further five are grade 2* and there are also 13 buildings of local interest.
- 1.12
- There were 3 tree preservation orders within the area prior to designation. Such orders only applied to trees considered to be at risk at the time and all trees within the Conservation Area are now protected. A survey of the most significant trees was made prior to designation.



Historical Development

- 1.13
- The alluvial soils and gravel terraces of the Ouse Valley have attracted human habitation since prehistoric times. The site of the present day Hemingfords was similar in this respect to other places along the valley of the River Great Ouse. Neolithic and Iron Age farmers would choose suitable sites along the gravel terraces where the land was reasonably dry but near water. By Roman times the archaeological evidence suggests that the Ouse Valley was

intensely farmed. There is some evidence that there was Roman settlement here and this would have been within the influence of the Roman town of Durovigutum about four kilometres to the west on the site of present day Godmanchester. Today's habitation patterns, however, have their origins in the Anglian Settlement following the departure of the Roman Legions in the fifth century. Although the early English settlers would be attracted to similar sorts of places as their predecessors it is not known to what extent there was any continuity in the actual choice of sites.

The Early Medieval Settlement Pattern

The early medieval settlement pattern for The Hemingfords is rather obscure. The area now covered by both modern day parishes seems to have been referred to as Hemingford around the Time of the Conquest. That only one church was recorded here in the Domesday Survey (probably that of Hemingford Abbots) suggests both places were part of the same parish. However, there were several manors here, the most important of which was the one granted to Ramsey Abbey by Earl Ailwin, a gift confirmed by King Edgar in 974. The manor of Hemingford Grey (originally called East Hemingford) was also for a time in the hands of Ramsey Abbey, having been granted to the abbey by the Dane Hardecnut and his mother Aelgiva in about 1042.

There is some evidence for Danish settlement in the district. The hamlet of Thorpe (now in the parish of Hemingford Grey) is a typical Danish settlement name and may originate from the Danish incursions of the ninth century. Set between the later medieval village settlements it is centrally placed within the Saxon district of Hemingford.

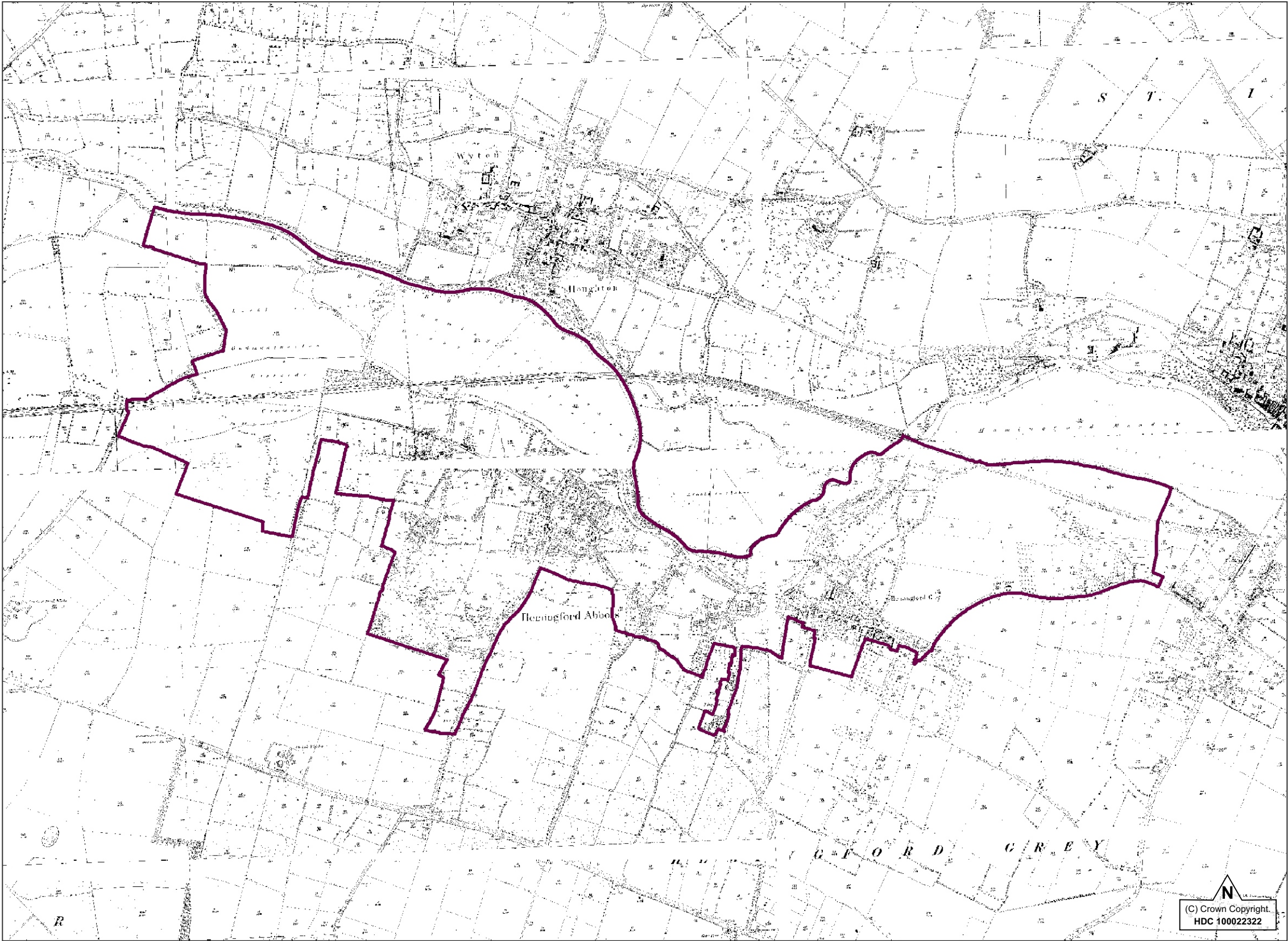
Later Medieval Settlement Morphology

The creation of Hemingford Grey as a separate parish seems to have been a 12th century phenomenon and a result of the manor being returned to lay tenure following the Conquest. Domesday Book records it as being possessed by Aubrey de Vere in 1086, whose tenant was one Ralf son of Osmund. Ralf was succeeded by his Son Payn de Hemingford who almost certainly built Hemingford Grey Manor House at about the same time that the parish church was established. The manor (and parish) was named in the thirteenth century after the de Grey family which was by then in possession. The name Hemingford Abbots reflects the possession of the manor and advowson of the church by Ramsey Abbey until its Dissolution in the sixteenth century.

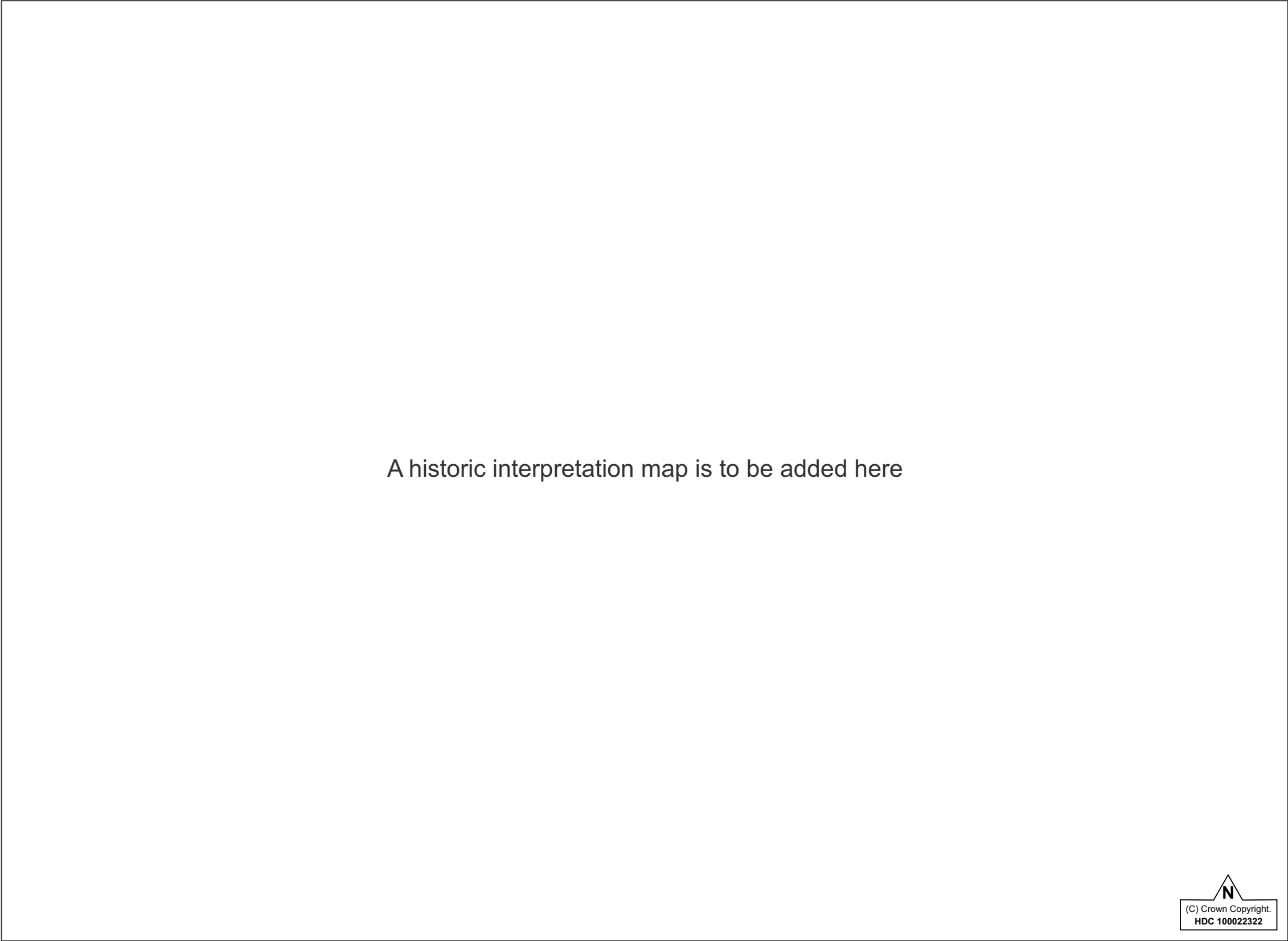
Post-Medieval Development

Both the Hemingfords remained essentially farming communities well into the twentieth century since when the population is, in the main, no longer economically dependent on agriculture. Both parishes were enclosed in the early nineteenth century. The improvements to the navigation of the Great Ouse, from the seventeenth century, particularly benefited Hemingford Grey, perhaps partly because of its proximity to St Ives. By the 1840's Hemingford Grey's population was almost double that of Hemingford Abbots and there was a degree of industry there including a malting.

Map 2. 1880 Historic Map



Map 3. Historic Interpretation Map



2.0 The Analysis of the Conservation Area

- 2.1 The Hemingfords have developed over a long period of time and each phase of their development has contributed distinctive elements within the settlements. These elements have become recognisable neighbourhoods with their own characteristics that together create the overall sense of place.
- 2.2 When the first Conservation Area was designated for the Hemingfords it principally encompassed those neighbourhoods with the oldest buildings (effectively the network of village streets to the south of the river) as well as the meadows that provide the setting for these settlements. The new Conservation Area has been expanded to include the most significant elements that reflect the growth and development of The Hemingfords since the Middle Ages.
- 2.3 This is the result of a major re-assessment of these two village communities and a re-appraisal of the architectural and historic merits of many aspects of the settlements. The resulting boundary is quite broad and falls naturally into defined localities that largely correspond to the historical phases in the development of the Hemingfords referred to in the account of the historic development of the villages in section 1 above. They are also similar to those identified in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (map 4, page 10)
- 2.4 It is important to note, however, that the assessment and interpretation of the new and enlarged Conservation Area (in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements set by government and English Heritage) needs to take account of the whole area. Its division into localities and neighbourhoods is intended only to make analysis and understanding more accessible and does not imply that each locality would pass all tests set by statute and regulation as if it were a self-contained Conservation Area in itself.
- 2.5 Table 1 lists the localities within the Conservation Area (as shown on map 4) and the subdivision of these localities into neighbourhoods.
- 2.6 This table also gives a written overview of the general character of each locality. This general description is expanded into a detailed analysis of each locality in a plan and table format under the following headings:

Character analysis

A plan based analysis giving a graphic description of each locality. The symbols used on the maps are described more fully in figure 1, page 37.

Spatial Analysis

Within each locality the most significant relationships between built and open spaces are analysed in terms of their key spatial features. This includes building lines, green features and mass etc.

The Main Building Types

These are illustrated on the accompanying plan for each locality. The building types help to define the character of each of the neighbourhoods and need to be taken into account when planning enhancements and future development. A full description for each type of building is given in Annex A, page 26.

Building Details & Materials

For each locality examples of significant architectural features are reproduced to illustrate the existing historical built form.

Material. A summary of materials used in the various areas. This illustrates the range of materials most commonly used. It will show where material choice is limited and where more variety may be used.

Detail. This presents some of the architectural detail relevant to each area, for example the most common window and door details present. As with the materials sheet, it will help to show the degree of variety available. It will also show where traditional or modern details predominate.

Design Code

The intention of the Design Code is to establish a generic set of 'principles' that underpin the built character of the different historic localities within The Hemingfords. It does not contain an exhaustive set of design 'rules' but it does identify defining characteristics. By identifying detailed information on characteristics in a quantifiable way it is possible to use this information positively in the design of new development.

The Code is developed in a series of matrices. Each surveyed area is looked at in the following way:

Grain. This is a visual overview of the pattern of development. It illustrates the general characteristics of an area's layout, particularly the arrangement of building plots. This will, at a glance, identify some of the fundamental layout issues that contribute to the place's character.

Plot. Having established the general characteristics of the area, the plot column looks in more detail at the individual streets and building plots. Two pieces of information are conveyed here: firstly, the degree of enclosure and street width (which gives an impression of the street's narrowness or openness). Secondly, the typical dimensions of plots in the street and the typical position of the building within that plot (for example, set forward, set back, filling the width of the plot or detached within it etc).

Visual Quality. This describes the visual impact of the area from street level. It also describes form or more detail about the dimensions of the principal blocks, and their heights.

Design Code Summary. Each locality is summarised in turn to highlight the similarities and differences between each part of the Conservation Area as a whole.

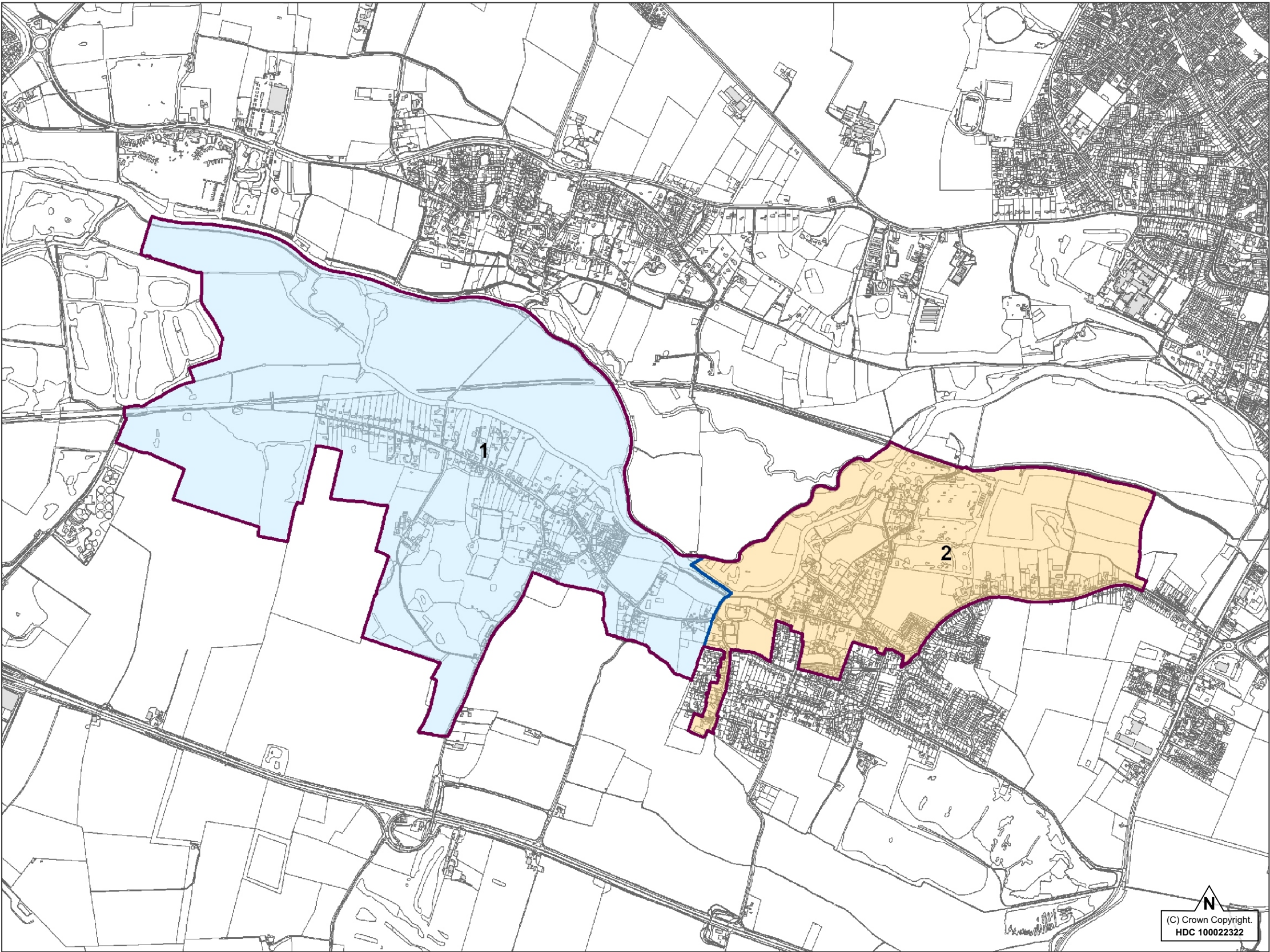
The Recording of Spatial Information

All the information collected on the settlements within the Hemingfords Conservation Area for use in this character assessment and displayed in map form have been recorded within Arch View. This is a Geographical Information System (GIS) that allows spatial information to be permanently stored and then displayed at suitable levels of detail and scales as required. The maps used in this document to illustrate local character etc have been chosen to fit the needs of the document but may be enlarged subsequently if more detail needs to be displayed.

Table 1. Localities and Neighbourhoods within the Conservation Area

Locality	1. Hemingford Abbots	2. Hemingford Grey
Neighbourhoods	High Street; Watts Lane; New Road; Royal Oak Lane; West Lane; Rideaway; Meadow Lane; Common Lane	Hemingford Road; St Ives Road; High Street; Church Lane; Church Street; Mill Lane; Braggs Lane; Manor Road; The Thorpe
Overview	<p>The village morphology of Hemingford Abbots is of a type found elsewhere in Huntingdonshire based on a potentially planned twelfth century settlement only later modified after Enclosure. The church and manor house lie in association between the river and its principle street. Along this east to west axis there were a number of farmsteads strung out along the length of the street; other dwellings now fill in the gaps between them. Opposite the site of the church and manor, to the south, is an area bounded by lanes that was previously open (even as late as the 1950's, apart from the Parish Hall and a row of cottages). It is likely that this was at one time a green. To the west the street leads to Godmanchester Eastside Common, to the east to Hemingford Grey.</p> <p>The spire of the church is a local landmark and visually unifies the village. There are some fine historic buildings, many of them thatched. However, the variety of architecture from many ages lends robustness to the built environment that imparts visual grit without detracting from its rural attractiveness.</p> <p>To the north, between two channels of the River Great Ouse lies the first of Hemingford's great meadows. This is characteristic of riparian settlements of the district. An embanked railway line dissected this meadow in the nineteenth century, the earthworks of which remain today.</p> <p>Hemingford Park is a fine example of an early 19th century country house and park (it does not appear on the enclosure map of 1806). To the east of the village centre, at the junction of the High Street and Royal Oak Lane is the base of an ancient cross (probably not in its original location).</p>	<p>The village of Hemingford Grey is memorable for its long sinuous High Street lined with fine historic buildings from various ages, predominantly built up to the pavement edge. To the west the High Street leads to the riverside, along which is situated the twelfth century Manor House and, a little to the north, the Parish Church with an unusual truncated spire. To the north of the High Street are a number of lanes, which bound a triangular stretch of land now largely built upon. It is possible that this was originally an open green of the type found at Eynesbury and Eaton Socon.</p> <p>The eastern boundary of the parish was traditionally marked by the London Road from St Ives, connected to the village by two public ways running east to west. The most northerly of these, traversing the meadows, is now a footpath, whilst that to the south forms the present day St Ives/Hemingford Road. Along this road are the post enclosure farmsteads for this part of the parish. To some degree Hemingford Grey has shared in the prosperity of St Ives over the ages and its comparatively large population in the 19th century reflects this.</p> <p>On the western boundary of the parish, just south of the Manor House lies the once detached hamlet of Thorpe, an unusual survival of dispersed settlement in a landscape where by the later Middle Ages (until Parliamentary enclosure) most of the population lived within the village.</p> <p>As the River Great Ouse flows past the site of the village it is much braided with several channels. This has resulted in the formation of a number of islands and a complexity of meadows that are a feature of the area. Hemingford Grey's meadowlands are situated to the north east of the village largely separated from it by a series of lakes formed by the flooding of excavations made for the purpose of gravel extraction. These now form an attractive area for wildlife.</p>
Enhancements	Hemingford Abbots is a well cared for village and is not in need of any great enhancement. Some improvement to road signs might be beneficial and car parking may be an issue at certain times.	<p>The historic core of Hemingford Grey is hemmed in to the south and east by the peripheral residential estates of the late twentieth century. Vicarage Fields is a good example of how new housing can be made to complement the historic settlement. The remaining open land within the Conservation Area would be better not built upon (including back lands) and ways should be sought to manage any opportunities for re-development on the boundaries of the later development within the historic core itself.</p> <p>The standard of paving, street furniture and signage (both in relation to buildings and road signage) is generally poor within the village. Parking is a particular issue. Much of the village centre lacks parking capacity and the random parking of cars is visually intrusive. Residents and businesses ought to be able to sort out more satisfactory arrangements for this otherwise splendid village setting.</p>

Map 4. The Conservation Area and its Sub Divisions (see Table 1.)



Hemingford Abbots Character Analysis

High Street; Watts Lane; New Road; Royal Oak Lane; West Lane; Rideaway; Meadow Lane; Common Lane

Hemingford Abbots is a riverside settlement that was well established before the Conquest, although the placing of its original habitation is not known. Early Saxon settlement in the area was often quite dispersed, as had been the Romano-British population that preceded it. There was a church in existence here by 1068, which was replaced by another with a central tower in the 12th century. This was a critical time for settlement morphology in Huntingdonshire, as in other places. Many new parishes were being created at this time (see the character analysis for Hemingford Grey, below) and it is possible that the communal management of agriculture through the open field system was also becoming established at this time. It is quite possible that the layout of the present day village was determined in the 12th century. This would have established Ramsey Abbey's manorial buildings at the centre of the settlement next to the re-built church [A]. In which case the island of land between the High Street, West Lane and Royal Oak Lane could have been originally designated as a Green [B] with the village houses on its northern and western sides.

The High Street today in the centre of the village widens and creates an elongated central space [C]. A short village street leads north from here to a small green situated between the parish church and the manor house [D]. This is a charming area of small agricultural outbuildings, enclosures, gardens, and cottages, many of which are rendered and thatched. The buildings to the south of the High Street are generally later and of brick and tile or slate construction. The building along the High Street east to Watts Lane is more dispersed in general, but there are a number of workers houses built in the first part of the 20th century. At the corner of High Street and Royal Oak Lane there is the base and the broken shaft of a cross of probable medieval origin [E]. East from Royal Oak Lane the High Street runs to the crossroads with Watts Lane and New Road [F], which was constructed at the time of Parliamentary enclosure to connect with the Cambridge Road to the south. The first section of New Road was part of an ancient lane giving access to enclosures adjacent to The Thorpe in Hemingford Grey, and there is still a footpath through the fields from here to the Cambridge Road. A field separates the crossroad at Watts Lane from a small cluster of habitation on the parish boundary. Since the parish boundary itself would have been created after any settlement founded by the Danes as Thorpe in the ninth century, it is not impossible that any settlement here was associated with Thorpe itself.





















The northern part of the parish was already enclosed at the time of Parliamentary Inclosure in 1806 and dispersed habitation occurred along the highway both to the east and the west of the village centre from an unknown date (but certainly no later than the eighteenth century). The eastern section is described above and that to the west was at one time similar in form with habitation scattered amongst the fields near to the roadside. However, more recently the number of houses has increased so that from West Lane to the edge of Godmanchester's Eastside Common at the end of Common Lane, there are continuous plots containing (mainly) detached houses and cottages. This is now a strong feature of the settlement, but the rural atmosphere has been retained by the laying out of generous grass verges and the planting of native hedges and trees. That part of Common Lane west of Meadow Lane was built up from the mid 1950's and, therefore, its houses are mainly of a more modern design. However, the setting accommodates the non-vernacular architecture mostly found here.

Hemingford Park was laid out after 1806 on closes between the Rideaway and Common Lane. The preservation of ridge and furrow here indicates that this area was previously arable and most likely part of the settlement's early common field system. However, this does not preclude an early enclosure date for this part of the parish. Ridge and furrow is now rare in the district and what remains here and on the Eastside Common should be valued and preserved. The parkland itself is well planted with shelterbelts and lakes.

The railway from St. Ives to Huntingdon was opened in 1848 and was built on embankments across the Hemingford and Houghton meadows. This line has since been dismantled but its embankment remains and is a distinctive feature in the vicinity of the settlement. The creation of California Wood was probably the result of the line taken by the railway. The meadow for Hemingford Abbots was sub-divided at enclosure and some of the boundaries created then are still discernable from aerial photographs.

Key to Symbols

The symbols on the table below are used to demonstrate key features on the analysis plans which follow, a similar key, including a full description for each symbol, can be found on the inside back cover of this document.

Quick key to the symbols used on the analysis plans			
	Urban space		Glimpse
	Green space		Visual leak along building line
	Corner building/s		Historic green space
	Significant view		Other green space
	View stopped		Significant tree/s
			Landmark building
			Listed building
			Narrow urban space 'pinch point'
			Street requires enhancement
			Area requires enhancement
			Spatial orientation
			Intrusion into the street scene
			Back of pavement building line
			Building line set back
			Scheduled Ancient Monument

The plan for Hemingford Abbots has been divided into two areas so that the analysis can be read more clearly.

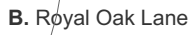


Cottage



Thatched cottages High Street





Area 2.



D. Green at Manor house



E. Base of village cross



F. Looking west towards the cross roads at Watts Lane



Hemingford Grey Character Analysis

Hemingford Road; St. Ives Road; High Street; Church Lane; Church Street; Mill Lane; Braggs Lane; Manor Road; The Thorpe

The main street in Hemingford Grey is the High Street, a long sinuous thoroughfare lined by historic buildings of many ages and styles. Those on the south side of the street include a significant number of timber frame cottages, some rendered, and many with thatched roofs. Their backlands were originally long and narrow (see the enclosure map of 1801), but many seem today to have been amalgamated. The curtilages north of the High Street are less generous and the buildings, by and large, of lesser age. This would be consistent with the original village tenements being located to the south of the High Street opposite an open green. There are a number of fine town houses in the village, such as the 19th century Vicarage and River House at the east end of the High Street by the Great Ouse [A]. The maltings off Church Street has been converted to dwellings, but are still clearly industrial in form with associated workers cottages [B]. There are many places along the village streets where glimpses into the backlands, and the sight of mature trees over rooflines, are characteristic.

The manorial site is at the river end of the High Street a little to the southwest [C]. This is a moated site with a twelfth century manor house, the oldest in Huntingdonshire. Church Street forms a shallow Y-junction with the High Street at its eastern end. The parish church is situated near the river at the end of Church Street, just northeast of the manorial site [D]. The truncated spire is a feature of the church, the upper part having been blown down in 1741. The first church was built in the 12th century (almost certainly when the parish became separated from Hemingford Abbots). This church probably had a central tower, a design it shared with its neighbour. From here there are views of note over the meadows towards Houghton and Wyton.





















A number of lanes lead off the High Street. Braggs Lane runs south towards the Cambridge Road, becoming Gore Tree Road at its junction with Manor Road, which later leads west towards Hemingford Abbots [E]. Opposite Bragg Lane is Church Lane, a short cut to Church Street from this part of the High Street. At the east end of the High Street was the village pound, from which Pound Road gave access south to Marsh Lane, Long Lane and the Common Fields there about. By the end of the eighteenth century there appears to have been an area of small lanes and scattered habitation north of Church Street. This became, during the course of the nineteenth century, the pleasure grounds of Hemingford Grey House (once the Rectory) and Madeley House. The grounds of the latter have now been built over to form a leafy, late twentieth century extension to the village.

At the time of Parliamentary Inclosure there were areas of earlier enclosure mainly to the south and east of the parish and away from the village. Houses and mature trees associated with the areas of habitation would have contrasted strongly with the open agricultural land of the common fields, which would have had few hedges and trees. Following enclosure the St Ives/Hemingford Road became the location for a number of farms, two of which remain today [F]. Hemingford Meadow to the north of this road (now included in the St Ives Conservation Area) was also divided into allotments, but the boundaries of few of these are discernable today. There were a number of water mills in Hemingford Grey parish from the Middle Ages, of which the one at the end of Mill Lane (off Church Street) is the sole survivor. The land to the east of the mill was transformed in the twentieth century by gravel workings, and subsequently some further housing has been built in the vicinity, but to no particular

plan. From Mill Lane there are important views across fields towards the present village school and the windmill (mentioned in documents from the seventeenth century).

South of the Manor House along the western boundary of the parish is an area known as The Thorpe. It is believed that this has its origins in a late ninth century Danish settlement, following the occupation of East Anglia by a Danish army at that time. The Thorpe was already enclosed by the late eighteenth century and corresponds to similar enclosures adjacent to it on the Hemingford Abbots side of the boundary. This area is something of an enigma, but its original character has been degraded through modern housing development.

By the nineteenth century Hemingford Grey had become a comparatively large village, but it was still a discreet nucleated settlement clearly associated with its agricultural landscape. Modern housing estates now abut up to the historic core to the south and east. Preservation of remaining agricultural land should be a priority to the north and along the St Ives/Hemingford Road.

Quick key to the symbols used on the analysis plans			
 Urban space	 Glimpse	 Landmark building	 Spatial orientation
 Green space	 Visual leak along building line	 Listed building	 Intrusion into the street scene
 Corner building/s	 Historic green space	 Narrow urban space 'pinch point'	 Back of pavement building line
 Significant view	 Other green space	 Street requires enhancement	 Building line set back
 View stopped	 Significant tree/s	 Area requires enhancement	 Scheduled Ancient Monument



A. Junction of the High Street with the Ouse



B. The Maltings



C. View southwest towards the manorial site



D. Parish Church of St James



E. Braggs Lane



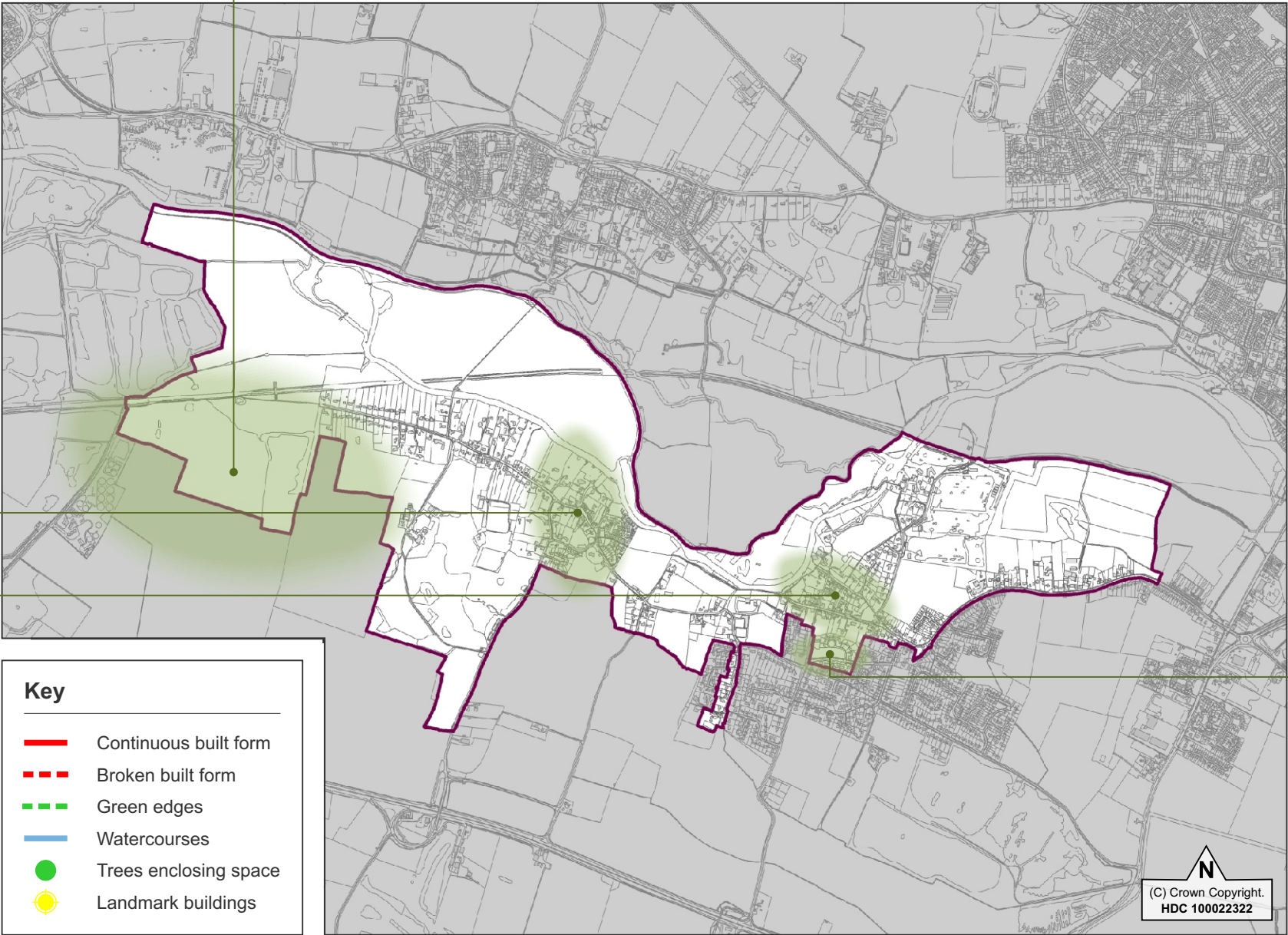
F. Post enclosure farmstead



The relationship of the original village form to the river is significant and the open land along the riverbank needs to be preserved. The Parish Church, Manor House, and the High Street form a spatial unit with the land encircled by West Lane and Royal Oak Lane (once possibly the village green). Open spaces, with their mature trees are a significant spatial feature and further infilling here should be resisted.



The association of the village form can be easily seen from this aerial photograph. The two main village streets, the High Street and Church Street diverge from a point to the east forming a triangular form with the River Great Ouse this may have been, originally, the village green. The manorial site can be seen to the west and the church, village graveyard and rectory to the north. The long curtilages of the tenements to the south of the High Street contrast with the more rectangular ones between the two main village streets.



This is a significant open space to the west of Common Lane that gives a distinctive settlement edge to Hemingford Abbots. There is good ridge and furrow on the Common, much of which may be medieval, perhaps being formed before the area became permanent common pasture. Arguably, this may be the most extensive example of this kind of earthwork left in Huntingdonshire. The embankment of the now dismantled nineteenth century railway line bisects the Common and the Ouse Valley long distance pathway also crosses it.



The area now occupied by Vicarage Fields was allotted to the vicar as glebe at Enclosure in 1801. This is an excellent example of a modern planned village green extension. A small subsidiary village green has been created framed by houses to the north and south. The offset angle of the road passing through the space preserves the rural feel of the space. The building line to the north has been determined by the curve of the boundary of the High Street tenements behind it. Mature planting has been preserved.

The Hemingfords Building Type Analysis



Please refer to Annex A for a further explanation and description of the building types mentioned here.

Hemingford Abbots

This neighbourhood contains the parish church [T10a]. There are various types of cottages and agricultural buildings in High Street, Common Lane and elsewhere [T1b; T3; T7a; T8], the Manor houses in the vicinity of the church, and other country houses [T2]. The Village Hall [T11b].

Hemingford Grey

There are buildings from every age from the late 17th century in this neighbourhood, with just a few medieval examples. Building types include the parish church [T10a] non-conformist churches and chapels of various styles [T10b]; civic buildings [T11a]; the maltings, the windmill and other pre-20th century industrial buildings [T9a]; medieval timber framing [T1a]; town houses [T2]; the occasional grand house [T6]; terraced houses [T3].











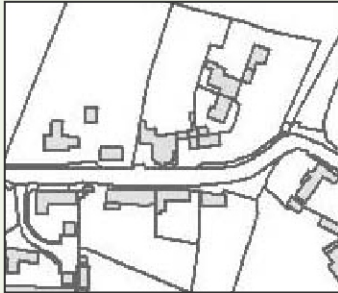

There is a wide range of vernacular styles from different historic periods within the Hemingfords Conservation Area. Timber frame buildings with thatched roofs originated within the farmsteads of the district. These were usually rendered and painted with lime wash in natural earth colours. They were often single storey buildings with an attic in the roof. Upper windows were either simple catslides or small gable constructions. Outbuildings typically had timber cladding under a thatched roof.



Earlier windows could be casements, but later ones were usually sash windows. The chimneys and doorframes of the grander houses were sometimes quite ornate.



Later buildings were constructed of brick, sometimes painted. Clay roofing tiles were used on many later buildings, often replacing thatch on some older ones. Ridge tiles were a feature in many buildings.

Grain	Plot	Visual quality	Summary
Neighbourhood streets: Hemingford Grey village centre			
<div></div> <p>Tight form of development along village streets. Grain more open behind with green spaces and mature planting. Occasional breaks between buildings.</p>	<div></div> <p>Plots vary, some being long and narrow typical of medieval tenements. Others are more rectangular. However, plot shapes tend to cluster and contribute to the distinctiveness of the morphology. Buildings predominantly edge of pavement or nearly so. Subsidiary buildings range back into the plots, not untypically forming courtyards. Occasional passages through.</p>	<div></div> <p>The village streets display gentle curves that foster constantly changing perspectives when passing through the space. Although there are some typical architectural forms, there is great variety of building types and materials. This, together with differences in ridge and eave heights as well as block width, creates an interesting visual quality that, in conjunction with the mature planting, gives an organic feel to the built environment.</p> <p>There is a varied colour palette to the built environment that reflects the mix of vernacular styles. There is a sense of old world prosperity here.</p> <p>The undisciplined parking and (frequently) poor street signage compromises the visual quality of the settlement.</p>	<p>There is a strong hierarchy within the streets and lanes of Hemingford Grey village. The High Street, with its continuous frontages and varied building types, has lanes off which create complex street corners, whilst Church Street has the feel of a back lane. This place is reminiscent of a small market town.</p> <p>Rural thatched cottages (often previously farmhouses) are a feature of the place, without being the dominant building type. Later brick workers or estate cottages and small-scale industrial buildings add grittiness to the settlement. Grander town houses give the place an urban dignity, whilst minor civic buildings and non-conformist places of worship add social texture.</p> <p>The setting of the place, however, is distinctly rural (where this has not been compromised by modern and unsympathetic development). The river setting is significant and the parish church amongst the meadows is one of the memorable features of the settlement.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Hemingford Grey Manorial site; The Thorpe; Hemingford Abbots Gateway			
<div></div> <p>This is an open grained area with some formal settlement elements. The lanes here have a form created by a series of short doglegs giving the locality its characteristic morphology.</p>	<div></div> <p>The plots here vary in size considerably. Some originally had the characteristic dimensions of medieval tenements with a long axis at right angles to the road with the buildings near to the pavement edge. Newer curtilage boundaries are more rectangular with buildings placed more centrally within their plots.</p>	<div></div> <p>This area has the visual quality of a village street, although it is really little more than a hamlet. This is emphasised by the alignment of the street, the back of pavement buildings, the rural vernacular of the buildings and mature planting. The older buildings are either painted render or brick, with plain clay tiles or thatch. The painted facades are typically in earth colours.</p>	<p>This is an historically interesting area because it possibly represents a pre-twelfth century settlement pattern adjacent to the river, not dependent on the later parish boundary.</p> <p>Manor Road skirts the manorial site on its way west to Hemingford Abbots with The Thorpe forming a spur off to the south east of an ancient trackway.</p> <p>The parish boundary runs through the middle of this neighbourhood that, by the late eighteenth century at least, was characterised as an area of closes. Thus the parish boundary at this point probably records a twelfth century estate boundary.</p> <p>Future management of this area would benefit from an holistic approach with the neighbourhood on each side of the present parish boundary being seen as one.</p>

Grain	Plot	Visual quality	Summary
Neighbourhood streets: Hemingford Abbots Village Centre			
 <p>This is a loose-grained area, typical of so many of Huntingdonshire's villages. The north side of the High Street is more tightly grained with continuous terraces.</p>	 <p>The size and shape of plots vary considerable in the village centre. Older buildings tend to be set near to the road or up to the back of the pavements; others are more centrally placed. Terraced properties in the centre have back yards that are frequently quite small. Early to mid-twentieth century workers houses often have relatively generous gardens. Older detached cottages and farmsteads sit comfortably within their curtilages.</p>	 <p>The village centre has charm and variety. The spire of the parish church is visible from all points within the settlement and gives it a visual unity. The village connects directly to its landscape setting without interruption from modern housing estates.</p> <p>There are still many of the older cottages and farmstead buildings with painted render under thatch (with scattered outbuildings weather boarded under thatch). Later buildings are often built with buff brick, some painted. Roofing materials (other than thatch) can be plain clay tile or slate. The colour palette tends to be muted.</p> <p>The curvilinear nature of the streets and lanes invite exploration and give interesting glimpses between buildings.</p>	<p>Hemingford Abbots is one of the finest village settings in Huntingdonshire. The village centre has developed a more extensive built environment since the eighteenth century, but is not perceived as being more urban. This has largely been achieved by infilling spaces between buildings over a long period of time and the creation of some modest terraces. Any further building, however, would start to change the nature of this settlement by creating too urban an environment.</p> <p>Currently, small-scale modern housing developments have been sited unobtrusively. If more were to be constructed, however, this may disrupt the connection that the settlement retains with its landscape.</p> <p>There is little or no scope for further development in this locality. Rather higher standards of design and workmanship should be expected where, exceptionally, future development does occur. Many of the buildings erected during the latter part of the twentieth century have failed to make use of local vernacular forms, materials and building traditions.</p>
Neighbourhood streets: Mill Lane and Common Lane, Hemingford Abbots			
 <p>Once open areas of mixed parkland, meadowland and (latterly) flooded gravel workings, this now also contains an open grained residential extension to the village.</p>	 <p>Plot sizes vary considerably, but all are generous. Buildings are typically set in the centre of plots, many of which preserve mature planting inherited from previous land-use patterns.</p>	 <p>These neighbourhoods have largely retained the air of the rural lanes that they once were. However, their well-manicured verges and more exotic planting can also give some parts a rather suburban feel, not in keeping with the village context of the rest of the settlement. The building styles and materials used in this area are not, generally, in keeping with the local vernacular tradition. The grain of development is being lost because buildings are demolished and the plots are being over developed.</p>	<p>In spite of later development there is still sufficient of the original agricultural, parkland or riparian landscape surviving to allow for a feeling of continuity. Any further development in this area could endanger this.</p> <p>Access along public roads is important to opening up the visual quality of the area to the general public. There are a number of points at which good views across open country is possible, and these should be protected. With increased residential development this area has become the green lung of Hemingford Abbots.</p> <p>There is concern that the over development of some plots in Common Lane is resulting in the loss of views out to the open countryside.</p>

3.0 Opportunities for Future Enhancement

National guidance on the constitution of Conservation Areas emphasises the important role that they can play in the enhancement of our historic built environment and landscape. The Hemingfords village environment would benefit where any future development is sensitive to the particular requirements of the historic components within the two settlements.

Small-scale enhancement within the different localities and neighbourhoods involving elements such as street improvements are discussed above. However, it is worth re-stating the need for improvement to paving, street furniture and signage along the main village streets, particularly the decluttering of signage is needed. Similarly, the issue of parking ought to be addressed, balancing the needs of traders and residents with environmental improvements.

Other documents are produced to help maintain The Hemingfords Character within the Conservation Area.

These further documents will address the following issues: -

Urban Design Frameworks. It is unlikely that an urban design framework will be needed in this area.

Development Briefs. These looks at sites that may become the subject of future applications for residential development. It is anticipated that plans for these sites would conform to the design code set out in this document.

Negative or Neutral Areas. There negative or neutral areas are identified the judgement is made purely in terms of the character of the conservation area. Whilst in some cases such sites may be suffering from neglect as well, in many cases the buildings associated with these sites will be structurally sound or recently built.

Enhancement Areas. Some areas that retain a significant degree of their historic fabric and form have, none the less, suffered from an unnecessary amount of poor development decisions. These areas require a concerted effort if they are to be brought back to their full potential. In these cases owners and residents should be consulted with a view to formulating policies to effect positive change.

Heritage and Tourism Areas. These areas have been identified as ones of particular significance to visitors and those concerned with local heritage issues. Future treatment of these sites will need especial sensitivity.

Annex A: Building Types

T1a	<p>Medieval Timber Framed House</p> <p>Medieval timber framed houses, frequently dating from the mid to late 16th Century. The type is often rendered, or faced in brickwork, and re-fenestrated in later periods, disguising its medieval origins. A fair number of such structures survive in the Hemingfords.</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oak framing (often reused) in filled with wattle and daub and covered with lime plaster/render• Two storeys, some with later dormer windows added to create attic rooms• Picturesque roofs; with steep pitches, numerous gables and large, sometimes ornate, red brick chimneystacks. Roof coverings depend on location, but the predominant types include plain gault-clay tiles and thatch• Overhanging eaves• Frequently built with L and H plan forms, with additive ranges of outbuildings• Jettying at ground and first floors, with bay-windows to some grander examples• Originally, windows (mullioned, with leaded lights) were set within the framing, but these were generally replaced by timber sliding sashes or casements in later periods• Medium to low density housing, depending on plot size• Varied form and scale, but usually detached, built within settlement boundaries• Commonly associated with burgage plots, and frequently set at back of pavement creating a well defined street pattern
T1b	<p>Vernacular Cottages</p> <p>Natural materials made from local geological deposits (for example, gault clays and limestone) together with reeds and straw from the nearby Fens and local farms, has generated the palette of traditional building materials for vernacular buildings. This, together with building techniques developed by the local population over many centuries, has created simple and charming vernacular cottages typically dating from the late 16th to 18th centuries.</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long, low double-fronted single, 1.5 or 2 storey cottages• Simple flat-fronted building form, generally eaves to the road• Buff or rosy-buff brick or stone built, depending on location. Rendered and painted timber framing is common throughout the District• Shallow plan depth with a simple steeply pitched roof and outbuildings• Clay plain or pantiles, thatch or Collyweston-slate roof coverings, depending on location

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eaves and gables are generally clipped close to the building, except for the deep overhangs found on thatched roofs• Originally built with small, horizontally proportioned window openings with casement or horizontally sliding sash windows. Flat or segmental brick lintels• Dormer windows are a common feature, with pitched, cat slide or eyebrow roofs, depending on material and location• Panelled or ledged and braced doors, with some later simple timber porches or canopies• Large brick chimneystacks were positioned first centrally and later at the gable ends• Within settlements, cottages are generally terraced and set at the back of the pavement, creating well-defined streets and space. <p>Typical Local Variations</p> <p>Rendered and painted timber framed cottages are common, with projecting weatherboards a distinctive feature. Cottages are frequently 1.5 stories, with many later examples built of a characteristic warm red brick. Cambridgeshire peg-tiles and thatched roofs are common.</p>
T2	<p>18th - Early 20th Century Town House</p> <p>The Town House building type is found throughout the district; its adaptability to a wide range of scales, materials and uses creates the variety, and strong architectural cohesion of the historic centres of the towns and larger villages. This classically inspired style creates well-defined and elegant streets and public spaces.</p> <p>During the 18th century it became fashionable to 'modernise' earlier vernacular houses, and it is common to find medieval buildings re-elevated behind Town House facades.</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Predominately terraced form, 2 to 3.5 storeys, generally double stacked with central gutter• Flat fronted and symmetrical, 2-4 bays wide, vertically proportioned facades• Vertically proportioned window openings, with flat brick or stone lintels, and timber vertical-sliding sash windows• Roofscape minimised by the use of parapets, shallow and double pitched roofs with the eaves to road. Cambridgeshire peg tiles and slate are the most common roof coverings• Stone detailing, often painted, including cills, stringcourses, architraves etc.• Drive-through archways, gaining access to the rear are a common feature, especially in former coaching towns• 6 and 4 panelled doors, with door-surrounds and glazed fanlights or door canopies• The terraced form, often built at back of pavement creates a well-defined street frontage of urban character

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-medium density, depending on the numbers of storeys, bays, and plot width. Generally built with additive ranges of outbuildings• Originally built as dwellings, some with shops on the ground floor. The majority are now in commercial and office use <p>Local Variations</p> <p>Many settlements in Huntingdonshire contain Town Houses in their historic centres. Built of warm soft red, dark buff and pale buff brick depending on age. Roofs are typically gault-clay plain tiles, although slate is found on later properties.</p>	
T3	<p>18th - Early 20th Century Terraced House</p> <p>The agricultural and industrial revolutions precipitated major growth of towns in the 18th and 19th centuries. Streets of small terraced houses were built on the edges of the historic settlements throughout the district. The type is ubiquitous throughout the country. Although influenced by local materials the advent of the railways improved transportation and encouraged the use of non-local materials, especially mass-produced bricks and Welsh slate for roofs. The majority of terraced houses in the district are built at the back of pavement, however there are examples of a larger version of this type with small front gardens, which creates a wider, greener and more relaxed streetscape</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small, generally flat fronted houses; bay windows are a feature on larger examples• Brick built, occasionally with contrasting brick detailing, such as string courses and door and window surrounds• Vertically proportioned window openings, with flat and segmental brick arches, and stone cills• Vertical sliding sash windows and timber panelled doors, typically with glazed fanlights over• Eaves and gables are generally undecorated and generally clipped close to the building• Chimneystacks are usually positioned on the party wall• Simple pitched roofs with slate roof covering• High density terraced form, laid out in long straight streets, creating a distinctive urban character• Parking on street	<p>The villa form became a popular antithesis to the narrow streets of small working-class erected housing during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. The semi-detached form, creating the illusion of detached villas, is also found in some locations.</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medium to large brick-built, detached or semi-detached houses• Decorative, contrasting brickwork stringcourses, eaves courses, lintels and window reveals• Canted and square bay windows are a feature, often with stone mullions, now generally painted white• Decorative stone detailing, including mullions, copings, padstones and plaques• Vertical window openings with stone cills, flat and segmental brick lintels, and sliding sash windows• Fairly low-pitched slate covered roofs, some with Italianate hipped roofs. Prominent brick stacks and chimneys• Large houses are set in spacious grounds. Urban examples have small front gardens that create a greener, more suburban street character
		<p>T5</p> <p>19th Century Picturesque</p> <p>During the Victorian era it became fashionable for wealthy and philanthropic landowners to build housing and other facilities for their tenants, and the local community. The predominant style was based on a Gothicised version of the idealised 'English' cottage, often creating picturesque groups or even whole villages. Generally, materials were of local origin, excepting more decorative elements such as cast iron windows and ornate rainwater goods</p> <p>The type is found in small numbers throughout the district.</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally symmetrical but with intricate plan forms, layouts and elevations• Architectural detailing used for decorative effect, such as buttresses, dentil courses, mouldings, bargeboards and stringcourses• Picturesque rooflines, with tall decorated chimney stacks, numerous gables, finials and decorated ridge tiles• Steep roof pitches, with slate or gault clay plain-tile roof coverings. Dormer windows are a feature on cottages• Strongly mullioned windows often with decorative lattice- work glazing patterns• Generally set back from the road with small front gardens and low walls to the front boundaries. Alms-houses often with courtyards defined by railings
27.	<p>The Hemingfords Conservation Area Character Assessment</p>	

- Originally built for a range of uses, including schools, estate offices, village halls, almshouses and estate workers cottages. The majority are now in residential use
- Medium to low density depending on use and plot size

T6 18th Early 20th Century Grand House

The agricultural and industrial revolutions brought new wealth to the district, and many of the wealthy built themselves grand houses, based on the classically inspired stately homes of the aristocracy. Later Victorian examples are influenced by non-classical traditions, and are often less symmetrical displaying stylistic motifs such as gothic arches, round towers, tile hanging and decorative bargeboards. Designed to be seen, and to impress, they are often found on settlement edges throughout the district.

Key Characteristics

- Large, detached houses with symmetrical, wide-fronted facades, usually on expansive plots
- Georgian examples are wide-fronted, with tall floor to ceiling heights, creating an imposing scale
- Vertically proportioned window openings vertically aligned, frequently graduating in height up the façade, with flat-arch stone or 'red-rubber' brick lintels
- Timber vertical-sliding sash windows. Georgian examples generally follow 9, and 16 pane patterns. Victorian sliding sash windows incorporate larger pane sizes
- Roofscape views are minimised through the use of parapets and shallow double-pitched roofs, with the eaves to road. Mansard roofs are found on some examples
- Decorative dentil eaves courses or painted timber cornice eaves detail
- Brick or stone detailing, often painted, including cills, string courses, keystones and quoins
- 6 and 4 panelled doors, with decorative-glazed fanlights or door canopies
- The grand detached forms, usually set back from the road behind railings or walls, create a restful, stately and less urban character
- Frequently set in gardens, with dark evergreen planting, with a backdrop of mature trees

Local Variations

The form, detailing and proportions remain fairly constant throughout the district, but materials vary with location.

T7a Arts & Craft Influenced Housing

The Arts and Craft Movement in the late 19th century, and the Garden Cities of the early 20th century exerted considerable influence on housing until the 1950s. This applied especially to social housing throughout the district, where estates of this housing type are found on the peripheries of the larger towns and as smaller developments on the outskirts of

most villages. 'The Garden City' cottage aesthetic, and the vision of a green and leafy arcadia became increasingly compromised through increased densities and mass production, but the architectural style and geometrical layouts still retain vestiges of the original influences.

The type is found throughout the country, but those found in Huntingdonshire also show local variations.

Key Characteristics

- Geometric, regular layouts with crescents, cul de sacs, and orthogonal junctions
- Semi detached and short terraces of simple flat fronted properties
- Clipped privet hedge front boundaries, often with timber gates, and small front gardens
- Shallow pitched, double-hipped roofs, with slate or plain tiled roof coverings. Simple chimneys on ridgeline
- Originally, multi-paned painted timber casement windows, with soldier-course brick lintels
- Timber front doors with small canopies
- Built of red mass-produced brickwork, frequently roughcast-rendered, and painted cream or pastel colours
- Simple stringcourses of soldier brickwork or render
- Semi detached form, hedges and grass verges to some streets, create a suburban character
- Parking generally on street

T7b 1920's And Inter-war Suburbia

The poor living conditions of the urban poor in the 19th century, and growing wealth and mobility resulted in the massive growth of suburbia in the 1920 and 30s. A few properties in the district retain influences of the 'Art Deco' of the 1920s. The Arts and Crafts movement also heavily influenced the architectural style of the period, using motifs such as timber framing, tile hanging, leaded lights and stained glass to invoke the idyll of the 'English Cottage'. This building type is found in small numbers throughout the district.

Key characteristics

- Simple rectangular semi-detached plan form
- Fairly rectilinear street pattern
- Shallow pitched, double-hipped roofs, with slate or plain tiled roof coverings. Chimneys generally on the ridgeline
- Originally painted metal, and later timber casement windows, some with latticed-lights or stained glass panels
- Mass-produced red brickwork and painted roughcast render

- Decorative gables with timber-framing effect, frequently painted black and white
- Double height bay windows, with rendered or tile-hung panel, are a defining characteristic of the type
- Recessed porches with tiled floors, and glazed front doors, often with stained glass panels
- Semi detached form, hedges and grass verges to some streets, create the archetypal 'suburban' character
- Medium-low density
- Parking off street, generally between properties

T8 Agricultural Buildings

This building type is found dispersed throughout the rural areas of the district, but also within some of the older villages, and coalesced into the suburban fringes of the larger settlements. The majority date from the time of the 17-19th Century Enclosure Acts, with some remaining examples from the medieval period.

Late 20th century intensification of farming practices have necessitated large-scaled, industrial type barns, stores and silos which have come to dominate many traditional farmsteads, and often their landscape setting.

Key Characteristics

- Large farmhouses (see vernacular cottages and T6), generally set close to the road, with long, low additive ranges of farm buildings set to the side and rear
- Traditional buildings are small-scale, built of stone, buff and red brick or timber-framed clad with timber weatherboarding, depending on location
- Roofs are generally simple pitched construction, covered with thatch, clay plain or pantiles, and picturesque in appearance
- Modern buildings are large-scale steel-framed single span structures, usually clad in profiled steel sheet, coloured grey

Local Variations

Timber weather boarded barns and outbuildings, many of which now have corrugated iron roofs. Later examples use red brick with slate roofs.

T9a 19th & Early 20th Century Industrial Buildings

Huntingdonshire has a rich heritage of these industrial buildings; some were located near waterways, which provided both good transport routes and potentially a means of power. There was a wide range of industrial buildings that included mills, malt houses, breweries, small workshops and others. Many buildings were associated with the railways, including warehousing and goods sheds (now mostly demolished).

Key Characteristics

- Large scale, visually prominent, discreet and freestanding structures with ancillary buildings
- Sometimes positioned in the floodplain. Often surrounded by willows
- 3-6 storeys tall. Generally built of buff brick, with slate covered or plain tiled roofs
- Projecting timber weather boarded loading-bays, and pulley houses
- Simple, robust symmetrical elevations with segmental-arched window openings, and loading bays positioned vertically one above another
- Rudimentary neo-classical detailing, such as pilasters and Italianate porticos are a feature on later examples. 'Gothic' detailed examples are also found
- Originally built as mills and warehouses, the majority are now converted for residential use

T10a Parish Churches

Ecclesiastical buildings survive from every century and architectural style -unique monuments to the districts' history and culture. Buildings range from Norman and Medieval parish churches to the neo-gothic of the Victorian era and the marvellously idiosyncratic Non-Conformist chapels of the 18-19th centuries. For clarity, key characteristics are listed under two subtypes as below:

Key Characteristics

- Large scale buildings for Christian worship and former monastic complexes, including surviving gate-houses and hospitium, typically built and altered over a long periods of time
- Set in a churchyard, often with mature trees, especially yews. Generally, parish churches are located centrally in the town or village, while monastic houses were usually situated on the periphery
- Although many are older, the majority appear externally to be Gothic in style, with large, pointed arched and traceried windows, and stained glass. Moulded stringcourses and hood mouldings, buttresses, castellated parapets and other structural and decorative architectural devices evolved and incorporated over time
- Simple, pitched roofs, generally with plain gault-clay roof coverings
- Building materials range from carstone and cobbles to coursed limestone-rubble, and fine ashlar limestone in the north
- Fine, tall spires are a landmark feature of the District. Lancet windows (small pointed window openings) are characteristic of spires in the Northern Wolds. Towers became increasingly common in the 15-16th centuries and were often added to earlier buildings in the 15-16th centuries

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lych gates are characteristic of church in the area and are defining features of many churchyards. Construction varies from oak with clay tiles to stone structures.
T10b	<p>Non-conformist Chapels</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple, generally unadorned facades, consciously avoiding the gothic architectural references of the established church Diverse stylistic influences, typically neo-classical Simple rectangular plan form, frequently gabled to the road Round headed windows, typically cast-iron frames, with clear or pastel-coloured glass Generally built of buff brick, with slate roof covering Cast iron railings and small paved forecourts are typical Catholic Churches and chapels (legally also “non-conformist”) are frequently neo-gothic and ornate.
T11a	<p>Victorian And Edwardian Civic Buildings</p> <p>This diverse type forms the focal point for community, civic and working life. It includes places of assembly, police and fire stations, shopping complexes, schools, libraries, administrative centres and office blocks.</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, architect designed buildings reflecting status and function Medium to large-scale buildings usually discreet in their own plots. Bank buildings often sited at landmark positions within the streetscape to reinforce status Variety of architectural styles, including some good examples of Arts and Crafts, and Neo-classical designs Diverse good quality materials, including buff and red brick with ashlar masonry and painted render. Dressed stone stringcourses; ornamental pilasters, cornices and copings are common embellishments Pitched, slate covered roofs are typical Frequently single storey but of very grand proportions Window styles vary with function; school buildings frequently have large vertically proportioned openings, positioned high in the wall

T11b	<p>Late 20th Century Civic Buildings</p> <p>The late twentieth century has witnessed substantial growth in population, changes in building technology and working practices. Large school complexes, for example, have generated an architectural aesthetic for civic buildings of our era; some examples use contemporary styles and materials, while others reflect aspects of the regional vernacular.</p> <p>Key Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large to medium scale buildings, generally with large areas of associated car parking or hard standing Varying number of storeys depending on function Amenity shrub planting, small ornamental trees and mown grass typify landscaped areas Generally avoid the use of decorative architectural devices, although good design generates pleasing visual effects through the manipulation of form, function and materials Mass produced buff and red brick are the most common facing materials, with large areas of glazing also a feature Other twentieth century materials found in civic buildings include metal trims and copings, cedar boarding, glulam beams, coloured powder-coated metal window frames and large areas of toughened glass Flat roofs were a feature of 1960-70s civic buildings, and low-pitched roofs on later examples. Brown or slate grey concrete roof tiles are typical roof coverings Generally, rather shallow detailing with minimum set backs at door and window reveals, creating rather flat, poorly modulated facades
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Annex B: Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings

Location	Address	Grade	Type	Wall Material	Roof Material
Hemingford Abbots	Cross Keys, High Street	II	House	Timber frame, render, local red brick, weatherboard	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Axe and Compass PH, Church Lane	II	Pubic House	Timber frame, render, gault brick	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	No. 3 (Whiteways), Common Lane	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, gault brick	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Park Farm Cottage, Common Lane	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local red brick	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	No. 24 (Whitehall), Common Lane	II	House	Local red brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	No. 44 (Medlands), Common Lane)	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local red brick, weatherboard	Thatch, pantile
Hemingford Abbots	Thatched Cottage, Common Road	II	House	Red brick, render	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	No. 35 (The Grange), Common Road	II	House	Red brick, render	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Tigh Buie, High Street	II	House	Gault brick, red brick	Slate
Hemingford Abbots	Abbots Barn, High Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local brick	Thatch, plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Barn to west of Abbots Barn, High Street	II	Barn	Local brick	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Merriemead, High Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, local brick	Thatch, plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	No. 5, High Street	II	House	Gault brick	Slate, thatch
Hemingford Abbots	No's. 3 & 5 (Barnfield), Common Lane	II	Barn, house	Local red brick	Modern tile
Hemingford Abbots	Barn to south west of Cross Keys, High Street	II	Barn	Timber frame, weatherboard	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Abbots End, High Street	II	House	Local red brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	The Forge, High Street	II	House	Timber frame, render, local red brick, local yellow brick	Plain tile, pantile
Hemingford Abbots	Outbuildings to east of The Forge, High Street	II	Forge	Gault brick	Pantile
Hemingford Abbots	Rideaway Cottage, Rideaway	II	Cottage	Timber frame, local brick, yellow brick	Thatch, plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Hemingford Park Hall, Rideaway	II*	House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Abbots	Stables and Coach House to Hemingford Park, Rideaway	II	Stable, coach house	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Abbots	The White Cottage, Royal Oak Lane	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local red brick	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Springfields, Watts Lane	II	House	Local red brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Cricket Pavilion, Hemingford Park, Common Lane	II	Cricket pavilion	Brick, timber frame	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	School, Common Lane	BLI	School	Gault brick	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	No's. 2, 3 & 4, High Street	II	House	Local brick	Slate
Hemingford Abbots	No. 4 (The Coach House), Common Lane	II	House, coach house	Gault brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Telephone Kiosk, High Street	II	Telephone kiosk	Cast iron	None
Hemingford Abbots	Barn within curtilage of Barns Hall, Rideaway	BLI	Barn	Gault brick, weatherboard	Thatch, plain tile

Location	Address	Grade	Type	Wall Material	Roof Material
Hemingford Abbots	No's. 14, 16 & 18, Common Lane	BLI	House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Abbots	No. 12 (Walden Cottage), Common Lane	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Church of St Margaret, Church Lane	I	Church	Limestone rubble, Barnack limestone, gault brick	Lead, copper, stone slate
Hemingford Abbots	Barn west of Anglers Perch, High Street	BLI	Barn	Timber frame, weatherboard	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Barn at south east corner of Royal Oak Lane and High Street	BLI	Barn	Timber frame, local red brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	No.26 (West End Cottage), Common Lane	II	House	Timber frame, render, local brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	The Lodge to south east of Hemingford Park Hall, Rideaway	II	Lodge	Gault brick, limestone	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	No's. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12, High Street	II	House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Abbots	No.2 (The Old Rectory), Common Lane	II	Rectory, house	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Abbots	No. 1 (The Cedars), Common Lane	II	House	Gault brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Barn to west of No. 44 (Medlands), Common Lane	II	Barn	Timber frame, weatherboard	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Outhouse to north of No. 14 High Street	II	Bakehouse	Gault brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	No. 13 (Wheatsheaf Cottage), High Street	II	Cottage, Public House	Timber frame, gault brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Pair of houses south east of Axe and Compass PH, High Street	BLI	House	Gault brick, red brick, black brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	No. 14 (Beverley), High Street	II	Cottage	Local brick, gault brick	Thatch, plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Little Cote, Rideaway	BLI	Cottage	Timber frame, local brick, gault brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Beechers, High Street	II	Cottage, barn	Timber frame, render, local brick, weatherboard	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Oak House, Royal Oak Lane	BLI	House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Abbots	Sunnymede, High Street	II	Cottage	Local yellow brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Abbots	Barn to north of Old Farm Cottage, Church Lane	II	Barn, garage	Timber frame, weatherboard	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	The Manor House, Church Lane	II	Farmhouse	Timber frame, brick	Plain tile, lead
Hemingford Abbots	Rectory Farmhouse, Cambridge Road	II	Cottage	Timber frame, brick	Thatch
Hemingford Abbots	Jennifer, High Street	II	Cottage	Local red brick, local yellow brick	Thatch, plain tile
Hemingford Grey	No. 4 (Dove Cottage), Church Street	II	Cottage	Local brick, gault brick	Plain tile, decorated ridge tile
Hemingford Grey	No. 1 (Oak Cottage), Church Lane	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, gault brick, weatherboard	Thatch, plain tile
Hemingford Grey	No's. 49, 51, 53 & 55, High Street	BLI	Cottage	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	Stable and Hayloft west of No. 58 (Broom Lodge), High Street	BLI	Stable, Hayloft	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	No. 54 (Stable Cottage), High Street	BLI	Cottage	Gault brick, modern brick, weatherboard	Pantile
Hemingford Grey	Cullums Farm, London Road	BLI	Farmhouse	Gault brick	Slate

Location	Address	Grade	Type	Wall Material	Roof Material
Hemingford Grey	Limes Park, London Road	BLI	Workhouse, House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	No's. 44 & 46, High Street	BLI	House, Public House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	No. 67 (River House), High Srteet	II*	House, studio, conservatory	Gault brick, red brick	Plain tile, modern tile
Hemingford Grey	No's. 26 & 28 (Cleveland Cottages), Church Street	II	Cottage	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	No. 50, High Street	BLI	House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	Highfields (west of track running to main road) A604	BLI	Cottage	Gault brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	Corner Cottage, Manor Road	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local red brick	Thatch, pantile
Hemingford Grey	Diss Cottage, Mill Lane	II	House	Modern red brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	Mill House, Mill Lane	II	House, barn	Local brick, timber frame, weatherboard	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	Tower Windmill, St Ives Road	II	Windmill, house	Gault brick	Metal
Hemingford Grey	Madelay Lodge, Madelay Court	BLI	Coach house, house	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	Boat house c10 yards north east of Beam Ends, High Street	BLI	Boat house	Timber frame, weatherboard	Thatch
Hemingford Grey	No. 29 (St Francis House), High Street	BLI	House	Gault brick, limestone	Slate
Hemingford Grey	Post Office, High Street	BLI	Post Office, house	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	No. 47 (The Cock Public House), High Street	II	House, Public House	Local brick, gault brick, modern brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	Dovecote to rear of No. 6, Church Street	BLI	Dovecote	Gault brick	None
Hemingford Grey	Willows Cottage, High Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local red brick	Thatch
Hemingford Grey	No's. 34 & 36, High Street	II	House, rectory	Gault brick	Modern tile
Hemingford Grey	No. 40, High Street	II	Cottage, barn	Timber frame, local brick, gault brick	Thatch, pantile
Hemingford Grey	No. 48, High Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	Church Rooms, High Street	II	Hall	Gault brick	Slate, decorated ridge tile
Hemingford Grey	Church of St James, Church Street	I	Church, wall, headstone	Limestaone rubble, Barnack limestone, local brick	Slate, lead
Hemingford Grey	The Manor House, High Street	I	Manor house, moat	Limestone rubble, Barnack limestone, local red brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	No. 30 (The Glebe), High Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, brick	Thtch
Hemingford Grey	No. 33 (Jubilee Reading Room), High Street	BLI	Reading room	Gault brick, red brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	No. 2, Church Lane	BLI	House	Gault brick, render	Slate
Hemingford Grey	No. 16 (Holly House), High Street	II	House, cottage	Timber frame, gault brick, local red brick	Plain tile, slate
Hemingford Grey	No. 38 (The Anchor), Church Street	II*	Public House, Cottage	Timber frame, render, gault brick	Thatch
Hemingford Grey	No. 44 (The Old Cottage), Church Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local brick, gault brick	Plain tile, modern tile

Location	Address	Grade	Type	Wall Material	Roof Material
Hemingford Grey	Hemingford Grey House, Church Street	II*	House, hotel	Local red brck, modern brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	Victoria Terrace, (No's. 1 - 38 (consecutively), Hemingford Road	II	Cottage	Gault brick,limestone	Slate, modern tile
Hemingford Grey	No. 27, High Street	II	Cotage	Timber frame, render, local red brick	Pantile
Hemingford Grey	No. 37, High Street	II	House	Local brick	Plain tile, decorated ridge tile
Hemingford Grey	No. 39, High Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, local brick	Thatch
Hemingford Grey	No's. 61 & 63, High Street	II	Cottage	Local brick, gault brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	New Bridge, London Road	II	Bridge	Gault brick	None
Hemingford Grey	River Cottage, High Street	II	Cottage	Gault brick	Pantile
Hemingford Grey	No. 18 (Rosenthal), High Street	II	House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	No. 26 (Shenfield Cottage) and No.28 (Threehouse), High Street	II	House	Timber frame, render, local brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	Barn to south of The Glebe, High Street	II	Barn	Timber frame, gault brick	Thatch
Hemingford Grey	No. 52 (Vine Cottage), High Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, brick	Plain tile, pantile
Hemingford Grey	No. 56 (Harcourt), High Street	II	House	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	No. 58 (Broom Lodge), High Street	II*	House	Local gault brick	Plain tile
Hemingford Grey	No. 60 (The Bells), High Street	II	House	Local red brick	Plain
Hemingford Grey	No. 74, High Street	II	Cottage	Timber frame, render, local red brick	Thatch
Hemingford Grey	No's. 32 & 34 (Rue Cottage) and No's. 34a & 36, Church Street	II	Cottage	Gault brick	Slate
Hemingford Grey	Summer house to east of No. 67 (River House), High Street	II	Summer house	Timber frame	Thatch

Annex C: Key Development Plan Policies and Reference Material

Key Development Plan Policies and Government Guidance on Conservation Areas

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (adopted 2003)
In particular, Ch. 7: Resources, Environment & Heritage

Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1997)
In particular Ch. 7: Buildings of Architectural and Historic Interest, and Environment.

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration (2002)

Regional Planning Guidance 14 (East of England Regional Assembly)

Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) Supplementary Planning Guidance

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) Supplementary Planning Guide

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Planning Policy Guidance 15, Departments of the Environment and National Heritage, September 1994.

Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, English Heritage, February 2006.

Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, English Heritage, February 2006.

Reference Material

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















Maps:

a. 25 " OS Maps, 1880, 1897, 1924, & 1950

b. Hemingford Abbots Inclosure Map 1806

c. Hemingford Grey Inclosure Map 1801

Figure 1. Key (in full) to Symbols used on the analysis plans

	This represents an urban space that has a degree of enclosure
	This represents a green space that has a degree of enclosure
	This represents a corner building/s that spatially link areas or streets (known as a pivotal corner)
	Significant or important view or vista within, into or out of the Conservation Area
	The situation where a building or other structure blocks ("stops") a view
	Indicates where a glimpse (or series of glimpses) of one space may be seen from another
	Indicates where a building line has failed, allowing the visual integrity of the street to "leak" out
	Historic Green Space
	Other Green Space
	Significant tree/s
	Scheduled Ancient Monument
	A building that forms a landmark within the Conservation Area
	Listed Building
	Urban space that narrows down, inviting the viewer to explore the space beyond: "pinch point"
	Street that would benefit from enhancements, e.g., improved signage or parking arrangements
	An area that would benefit from enhancement
	Spatial orientation
	An intrusion into the historic street scene caused by, for example, inappropriate buildings
	Street characterised by back of pavement building line
	Street characterised by a set back building line